



Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

Facultade de Filoloxía

Grao en lingua e literatura inglesas

Traballo de fin de grao

A study on semantic and lexical variation:
Examining the competition between near-synonyms
from a diachronic perspective

Daniela Pettersson Traba

Directora: María José López Couso

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1. Introduction

Living languages around the world are continually changing for different reasons, both internal factors, for instance, morphological processes which are persistently employed in word formation, and also external factors, such as changes in society and culture. Within a language, lexis is the component which is most susceptible to change, especially when it comes to external influences, since as Stockwell and Minkova state (2001: 30) ‘for the structure of the vocabulary [of] a language, nothing is as important as the historical context in which the language evolved’.

1.1 Aims and materials

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the competition between the following near-synonyms from a diachronic perspective: *fear/terror/trepidation*, *guard/ward*, *beck/stream* and *napkin/serviette*. For this purpose a general overview of both lexical and semantic change will be provided in sections 2 and 3 so as to place the competition of these near-synonyms in a broader context. When dealing with lexical change, special attention will be paid to the process of lexical expansion known as ‘borrowing’, since the near-synonyms mentioned above have come to exist in the English vocabulary precisely through borrowing from different languages. Further, the notion of semantic change will be described, since it is closely connected to lexical borrowing, often taking place as a consequence of it. This process will be explained in order to give an understanding of why and how changes in meaning occur in view of the fact that some members of the pairs or trios of near-synonyms will inevitably have undergone some type of semantic change at some point in the history of English to differentiate them. As Samuels (1972: 62) states:

If two exact synonyms exist for a time in the spoken chain, either one of them will become less and less selected and eventually discarded, or a difference in meaning, connotation, nuance or register will arise to distinguish them.

In section 4 the aforementioned near-synonyms will be analyzed in detail, by taking into account their etymology and history on the basis of the information provided in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, among others. By doing so I will try to make clear how and when they entered English, but also try to trace their development in the language. In the last section of the dissertation a practical part will be included where the selected near-synonyms will be investigated in terms of usage by making use of the *British English 2006* and *American English 2006* corpora. This will be done to see how each member of the pairs or trios of near-synonyms are employed by English speakers today and whether they show differences ‘in meaning, connotation, nuance or register’, as Samuels (1972: 62) states, or if they can be employed interchangeably.

2. Lexical borrowing

2.1 Introducing lexical borrowing

There are approximately 7,000 known living languages in the world (Paul, Simons & Fennig, 2014) and therefore it comes as no surprise that languages tend to influence one another when people from different territories speaking different languages come into contact (Hock & Brian, 1996: 253). The process which implies that a language takes a linguistic item from another language is known as linguistic borrowing. This is a very common way of acquiring new lexemes within a language, since it is easier to take an already existing word than creating one from scratch (Katamba, 1994: 138-139). It is important to mention that, although lexical items are by far the most common borrowings, all kinds of linguistic material may be transferred from one language to another, including

phonemes, graphemes, morphemes and syntactic structures (Campbell, 1998: 62). In this dissertation the focus will, however, be mainly on lexical borrowing.

There are many different reasons why languages borrow from others, though the two most common ones are need and prestige. The former involve terms that are necessary in order to introduce a concept or a thing which is new or unknown in the borrowing language and there is, therefore, a lexical gap which can be filled by copying the foreign word together with the unfamiliar concept. By contrast, borrowings of prestige, sometimes also called unnecessary borrowings, are those that are transferred into a language without filling any lexical gap, since an equivalent expression for the same concept or idea already exists in the borrowing language. It must be noted here that these prestigious borrowings often contribute to the existence of stylistic variants, as is the case of some near-synonyms (Durkin, 2009: 142). Prestigious borrowings typically occur when the two languages or varieties that come into contact are not considered as having equal status, either within a particular field, as for example the fields of fashion, science or culture or more generally throughout most fields, situations or types of discourse.

Although borrowing may be bidirectional, which means that the two languages influence one another, in cases where there is a relationship of unequal status the quantity of borrowings will be much higher from the more prestigious language to the less prestigious one than vice versa. Moreover, borrowings of this kind will often be concentrated in semantic fields connected to the areas where the prestigious language is considered as more powerful and influential (McMahon, 1994: 202).¹ Not all contact situations do, however, imply an unequal relationship between the two languages, but may rather involve two varieties which maintain a relationship of equals, where none is considered more prestigious than the other. These two general classes of contact situations

¹This is the case of most borrowings from French and Latin in English, especially in the Middle English period but also in part of the Early Modern period (cf. section 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 below).

and the different kinds of social status which the speakers of the languages involved may have are often described by means of the notions of 'adstratum', 'superstratum' and 'substratum'. When two languages are considered of more or less equal status, they are referred to as adstrata, while if one language enjoys more prestige than the other, the more prestigious one is called superstratum and the less prestigious language substratum.

It is important to highlight these distinct kinds of situations which can arise, since the types of words that are borrowed differ greatly depending on the relationship that the speakers of the two languages in question maintain with one another. In adstratal relationships the borrowed words will generally be related to everyday vocabulary or even to so-called basic vocabulary, including expressions referring to the indispensable human needs and activities, as can be natural phenomena, or even functional words, such as pronouns, articles and conjunctions which are rarely affected in other situations of language contact. By contrast, in unequal relationships there are often more restrictions since the borrowings tend to reflect the kind of status that the donor language holds, either with prestigious connotations, if the donor language is a superstratum, or with more ordinary or even derogatory connotations, if the donor language is a substratum (Hock & Brian, 1996: 274).

If a language is subjected to extensive influence from another language for a long time, the result in the former may be more far-reaching, affecting not only its lexis but also its phonology, its morphology and even its syntactic rules by introducing new phonemes, morphemes and syntactic structures. Another important effect of large-scale borrowing is the development of synonymy between foreign and native words. This, in turn, typically leads to semantic change and consequently to these words becoming near-synonyms used in different styles and registers, since languages are economical systems and therefore work against exact synonymy (Hock & Brian, 1996:290-291). The process of semantic

change will be explained in more detail as a separate concept in section 3 below, but before doing so it is necessary here to take a close look at the history of English and the languages which have had a great impact on it throughout its history, focusing especially on Old Norse, Latin and French, but also on other languages that were influential in post-medieval times.

2.2 Borrowing in the history of English

English has undergone significant changes throughout its history when it comes to its vocabulary due to the heavy influences exerted by other languages, to the point that after the incorporation of thousands of new words of foreign origin, particularly from French and Latin, the rather homogenous lexicon of Old English became heterogeneous and English began to be regarded not merely as a Germanic language in terms of its word stock, but rather as a hybrid one (Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 30).

2.2.1 Scandinavian settlements and the influence of Old Norse

During the Old English period, from the eighth century onwards the Anglo-Saxon settlements on the British Isles were continuously attacked by Scandinavian seafarers and raiders, generally known as the Vikings (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001: 33). At the beginning these North Germanic tribes only plundered the settlements and then moved on to continue plundering other places. Later, however, some groups began spending the winter in Britain and with time the Scandinavians came to conquer a part of England and what is now Scotland where they settled down in the late ninth century (Barber, 2000: 128). The Vikings spoke a language called Old Norse, from which Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish have evolved. Old Norse is precisely, one of the

languages which have had a considerable impact on the early vocabulary of English (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001: 33).

The Scandinavians were never able to conquer the whole of England because King Alfred, ruling at that time, was able to save the South and West from the raiders. The Northern and Eastern parts of England were, however, surrendered to the invaders; this area came to be known as the Danelaw (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001: 33). There were, nonetheless, Englishmen living in the Danelaw together with the Scandinavians and, since Old English and Old Norse were mutually intelligible to a certain extent, given that both were Germanic languages, they did probably understand each other, which would have favored the borrowing between the two languages. Furthermore, the relationship between these two peoples was more or less of equals, and considering that their cultures were rather similar, one can say that their union was a close one (Barber, 2000: 131, 133).

The Vikings typically traveled without womenfolk and it is considered that intermarriage therefore was probably common, which in turn made the fusion of the two peoples an even closer one. Since their relationship was an adstratal one,² the borrowing took place in the mixed households, that is, in informal, everyday situations. It is thus no wonder that out of the around 1,000 words that were incorporated to English from Old Norse the great majority were ordinary, informal expressions and words belonging to the basic vocabulary. Some examples of words originating from Old Norse are common words as *skin*, *sky*, *knife* and *die*, among others, and also the pronominal forms *they*, *them* and *their* (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001: 33-34).

Given that the Danelaw included the North and the East of England, but not the South and the West, the influence of Old Norse was naturally more extensive in those

² For further information about adstratal relationships, see section 2.1 above.

parts which were under Scandinavian rule. This can be perceived even nowadays, for the reason that some Northern and Eastern regional dialects preserve a greater number of Scandinavian words than the standard language. In some cases these words have come to coexist with the more standardized forms, which means that doublets or near-synonyms such as *kirk/church*, *nay/no* and *lake/play* have developed in these varieties of English (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001: 34).

2.2.2 Roman dominance and different phases of Latin loans

Latin, today considered a dead language because of its lack of native speakers, was the language of ancient Rome, and as a result of the Romans' cultural, military and economic success during the Old and Middle English periods it became a powerful and dominant language, not only within the Roman Empire but also throughout the European continent and on the British Isles. English has been subjected to Latin influence at different times in history and the loan-words of Latin origin have entered English in different phases reflecting the significance of particular semantic fields at different periods.

The first Latin loans were incorporated to English in the 6th and 7th centuries in the field of religion, as a consequence of spread of Christianity on the British Isles. Latin became the language of the church and continued to be so for several centuries onwards. The monasteries and churches were, however, not only important centers of religion but also of scholarship, literature and writing and, through the increased literacy which followed the adoption of Christianity, many formal and so-called learned words entered English as well (Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 32).

Later, in the Middle English period Latin continued to be a prestigious language alongside Norman French (cf. section 2.2.3 below) and these two languages together,

considered as having high status, occupied the spheres of religion, literature and so on, whereas Old English was confined to informal everyday situations (Durkin, 2009: 149-150). Since French is a daughter language of Latin, it is sometimes difficult to establish whether a Romance word has entered English through French or directly from Latin.

Moreover, although the Roman Empire fell in late Middle English, Latin still continued to maintain significant power in Europe during the Early Modern period and the epoch known as the Renaissance, for Latin was still considered a language of high culture. Therefore, many words connected to literature, philosophy and science were incorporated to English between the 16th and 18th centuries before Latin suffered the significant decline which led to its final death (Stockwell & Minkova, 2001:32-33).

2.2.3 Norman French after 1066

Although England had some relations with France before the Norman Conquest, since Edward the Confessor³ was half Norman, one can say that this historical event had a great impact on England and the language of its inhabitants. In 1066, William, Duke of Normandy, generally known as William the Conqueror, won the battle of Hastings against the English and, as a result, was crowned king of England (Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 34-35). Consequently, many of the positions of prestige and influence, such as the aristocracy and ecclesiastical charges, were given to William's followers, replacing the Anglo-Saxon nobility who lost their power (Barber, 2000: 135).

These Normans spoke a northern variety of French, namely Norman French, which was different from Standard French or Central French, spoken around the area of Paris (Barber, 2000: 148). Norman French became the prestigious variety in England and was spoken by the Norman aristocracy and the upper classes, while the English lower classes continued to speak English. This clear division between the two languages did

³ The last Anglo-Saxon king of England before the Norman Conquest, ruling from 1042-1066.

not favor the existence of bilingual speakers, but since the English often had to comply with the French rules and orders, they must have learned some French. Moreover, those who spoke English and wanted to move upwards in society had to learn French. French influence, contrary to the Scandinavian one, was not restricted to a particular geographical area, but did instead spread from London, where the court was, to other parts of the country. Furthermore, French continued to be the language of the upper classes for at least two hundred years before English again began to gain prestige, and has thus left a more significant mark on English than any other language. Around 10,000 French words were incorporated during the Middle English period and approximately 75% of these are still in frequent use today (Barber, 2000: 135, 141; Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 35-37; Durkin, 2009: 149-150).

Most French words that were adopted clearly reflect the Norman's political and cultural supremacy, being concentrated in semantic fields as literature, war, ecclesiastical matters, administration, arts and fashion, among others. It was the vocabulary of English which was, above all, affected by this influx of French. However, French also affected the phonology and morphology of English, as some new phonemes, graphemes and a great number of derivative suffixes were borrowed as well. After the Norman Conquest many Old English words were replaced or duplicated by French ones. Moreover, this huge invasion of French words has obscured much of the original genetic similarities of English with Germanic sister languages since many words of Germanic origin were replaced by words of Romance origin (Tejada Caller, 1999: 155).

2.2.4 Norman French vs. Central French

It has already been mentioned that for the two centuries following the Norman Conquest

it was Norman French that English borrowed from (cf. section 2.2.3 above). However, when Norman French declined in prestige, the English did not stop borrowing French words. However, the influence shifted to Central French, which became prestigious in the 13th and 14th centuries and the French used in Paris and its surroundings became the new source of borrowing. As a result of this second wave of French influence, doublets of French words came to exist in English due to the fact that some words which had been borrowed from Norman French came to be borrowed again, this time in their Central French form. Given that these two varieties of French diverged in several ways, the doublets arising in English differed not only in terms of meaning, but also as regards form. Formal differences between the two varieties are found, for instance, in the Old French diphthong /ei/ which developed into /oi/ in Central French, whereas Anglo-Norman retained the Old French form. Moreover, the Germanic loans in Old French which contained the grapheme <w> were treated differently in Norman and Central French. <w> was maintained in the Norman variety, while it was altered to <g> in Central French, which gave rise to doublets such as *garderobe/wardrobe* and *warrant/guarantee* (Barber, 2000: 148).

2.2.5 Influence of other languages in the Early Modern period

The Early Modern period in England is characterized by a rapid expansion in the English lexicon, with around 4,500 new terms being recorded according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (henceforth *OED*) and of which more or less one third are considered to be borrowings from other languages. Although the importance of French borrowings suffered a considerable decline in the post-medieval epoch, English continued to incorporate words from many other sources. Many so-called learned words from the classical languages entered English during this period, given that they were

often employed in learned discourse. In addition, people who spoke either Latin or Greek were considered as having a high education (Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 39-41).

Moreover, English was also influenced by other European languages and cultural traditions such as Italian, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese, mainly due to the significant commercial relations England maintained with other countries. Italian was considered a prestigious language in the epoch known as the Renaissance and many Italian words, as for instance *squadron* (1562), *gondola* (1549), *balcony* (1619), *opera* (1644) and *concerto* (1730), have entered English in semantic fields such as military activities, architecture and music. Dutch loan-words take up more or less nine percent of the Early Modern English borrowings and, contrarily to Italian ones, they were not specialized in semantic fields, but were rather popular words. Some examples of these Dutch borrowings are *yacht* (1557), *knapsack* (1603) and *cookie* (1730). Spanish and Portuguese also influenced English a great deal, since both Spain and Portugal led the colonization of America at the end of the 15th century. These borrowings, as a result, often relate to their naval and military exploits of the new world, and sometimes they are indirect borrowings of American Indian languages which had first come over to Spanish and Portuguese before they entered English. This is the case of *potato* (1565), *cocoa* (1707), *palaver* (1733) and *poncho* (1748) (Stockwell and Minkova, 2001: 43-45).

2.3 Summary

This chapter has dealt with lexical borrowing, providing a general overview of the process and focusing on the reasons why languages normally borrow from each other. Different types of contact situations between languages have been presented, as well as

the kind of borrowings that typically occur in the respective situations. It has also been seen how the process of borrowing can lead to native and foreign words becoming synonyms which eventually brings about semantic change.

The remaining part of the chapter has been devoted to lexical borrowing in the history of English, concentrating particularly on those languages which have had a considerable impact on it at different points in history, such as Old Norse, Latin and French. Other languages from which English borrowed rather extensively in the post-medieval period, as for instance Latin, Greek, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish, have also been discussed.

3. Semantic change

Words generally change their meaning throughout the history of a language; this process is commonly known as semantic change. Before moving on to explain the reasons why changes in meaning are such a common phenomenon and how semantic change works, it is, however, necessary to clarify the term meaning, as it is in itself, as we will see in sections 3.1 and 3.2 below, far more complicated than one may imagine.

3.1 The complexity of meaning – different ranges of meaning

The reason why the notion of meaning is complex in itself is because a word usually has more than one type of meaning. In this section six distinct kinds of meanings will be presented: conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, stylistic meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning and collocative meaning (Leith, 1997: 70).

The most common one is the so-called conceptual meaning, which is the one that appears when we look up a word in the dictionary. This first type refers to what a word denotes or, in other words, to the reference of a particular word and is, therefore,

occasionally also called ‘denotative’ or ‘referential meaning’. The second type is known as connotative meaning and, as its name suggests, refers to what a word connotes or is associated with. Although the connotations of a word may differ from one person to another, they are generally more communal and objective than entirely personal. Stylistic meaning, the third type which will be considered here, implies that words are normally used in special contexts or fields of usage, for example informal or formal situations. The next type is affective meaning, which has to do with the attitudes and evaluations which words can transmit, e.g. some words may be terms of abuse or carry offensive connotations. The fifth type is known as reflected meaning, which arises in a word when it comes to develop an extra conceptual meaning, so that it reflects not only one but two conceptual meanings. The sixth and last type of meaning is called collocative meaning, which has to do with the idiosyncratic characteristics of words. Some words may have a related conceptual meaning but collocate with different sets of words, so that they are not generally used interchangeably and their connotative meaning often arises from the item with which they collocate. Moreover, words may share the same conceptual meaning but differ as regards the remaining ones, so that they connote different things, are used in different registers or collocate with distinct sets of items (Leith, 1997: 70-73; Katamba, 2006: 113-114).

3.2 Why meaning is particularly susceptible to change

There are several reasons why meaning is especially prone to change. In this section three important reasons will be discussed:

- 1) Languages are arbitrary.
- 2) Words are generally polysemic.
- 3) Semantic changes are difficult to classify.

Firstly, semantic change is ruled by Ferdinand de Saussure's idea of arbitrariness. The idea of arbitrariness implies that the linguistic sign, composed by a signifier (the letter or sounds) and a signified (the concept) maintain a relationship which is arbitrary. In other words, there is no natural connection between the sound or letters of a word and its meaning and, therefore, any word can come to be used in order to refer to any concept or thing (McMahon, 1994: 177). The idea of arbitrariness is not always accepted by non-linguists, who do therefore not understand why semantic change takes place as a natural process. As a consequence, these people often assume that the original, or at least older, meanings of words are the real ones, while new meanings that may come to exist are not. If one wants to understand the process of semantic change, it is however indispensable to acknowledge that the signifier and the signified are independent and that any of the two therefore can change with time (McMahon, 1994: 177-178).

Furthermore, words are generally polysemic, which implies that they typically have more than one conceptual meaning. As a word is used in many different contexts, this flexibility in meaning is absolutely crucial, since there are particular nuances which people want to transmit in different situations. It is also because of this flexibility that words can acquire or drop meanings without much difficulty, and it is, in addition, not necessary for a word to drop one so as to acquire another. Despite this flexibility, words do normally have one meaning which stands out more than the rest and it is the one which tends to appear first in dictionary entries. It is called 'central meaning', while the rest are called 'peripheral' or 'marginal meanings'. Semantic change normally takes place in a word when a central meaning is ousted by a marginal one (McMahon, 1994: 176).⁴

⁴ For further information about central and peripheral meanings, see section 3.3.

Finally, semantic change, contrary to other alterations within a language, is much more difficult to classify, for the lexis is a more open ended class than, for example, the phonological system of a language. Furthermore, semantic change is, as opposed to syntactic, phonological or morphological changes, very closely related to changes in the external, non-linguistic world, such as alterations in technology, culture or society in general (Durkin, 2009: 222-223).

3.3 Semantic change as a gradual process

Now that I have explained why semantic change occurs quite easily, it is important to make clear that semantic changes do, however, not take all of a sudden. It is, on the contrary, a gradual process in which two meanings typically coexist side by side for a while before one comes to displace the other and becomes the central meaning of the word in question, while the displaced one becomes peripheral. As mentioned in section 3.2 above, semantic change is said to occur when a central meaning is ousted by a marginal one. Nonetheless, sometimes semantic change takes place as a direct consequence of borrowing, since a loanword may take over the central meaning of a native word. In these cases what has been the central meaning of the native word typically undergoes some modification or simply ceases to exist, so as to avoid that exact synonymy occurs between the foreign and the native terms (Durkin, 2009: 225-226). There is, however, a period of time in which the two words in question will compete for the central meaning before the change takes place. Normally they will be exact synonyms for a certain time before they become near-synonyms instead (Tejada Caller, 1999: 151). When a borrowing ousts the native word in this sense, it is frequently because the foreign language is considered a superstratum and the native one a substratum (cf. section 2.1 above). Therefore, the native word in question typically

loses prestige in the process and the new central meaning it acquires is usually less general or more negative than the old one (McMahon, 1994: 176).

To explain what normally happens with the native words in the situations described above, it is necessary to introduce two specific types of semantic change, namely specialization and pejoration. The mechanism of specialization implies that the meaning of a word is narrowed, so that the number of referents which the word can denote is reduced (Brinton, 2006: 82). Typically the meaning becomes more restricted, given that the word in question acquires a new central meaning which is more specialized than the old one (Tejada Caller, 1999: 165). The process of pejoration implies that both the denotations and the connotations of a word are affected, so that the new meaning it gains is a less favorable one. Another type of semantic change which is very common is generalization. When a word undergoes generalization, the meaning of the word is widened, and can consequently denote a larger number of referents. Nonetheless, when a meaning becomes more general it directly loses some specific parts of the denotation, so that the number of semantic features decreases (Brinton, 2006: 82, 84).

3.4 Summary

In this chapter semantic change has been considered. Firstly, a range of meanings have been defined so as to clarify why the term ‘meaning’ in itself is so complex. Then three reasons why lexical meaning is so liable to change have been pointed out, namely that languages are arbitrary, that words typically are polysemic and that semantic change is difficult to classify.

The last part of the chapter has been devoted to explain that, albeit semantic change occurs rather easily compared to phonological or syntactic changes, it is nonetheless, a gradual process in which two or more meanings usually coexist for a time before one displaces the other to a peripheral state. The same happens with synonyms before

becoming ‘near-synonyms’. As a final point, three types of semantic change, namely specialization, pejoration and generalization have been described. Specialization and pejoration have been introduced since a considerable number of English words have undergone this type of semantic change when it came into contact with powerful and influential languages, while generalization has been explained as it is, as well, a very common type of semantic change.

4. Close analysis of a number of selected near-synonyms

In the preceding chapters we have considered lexical and semantic change, both in general and in particular with reference to the history and development of English. This has been done so as to provide a broader context for a number of near-synonyms which will be analyzed in detail in section 4.2, taking into account the information provided mainly in the *OED*. Before moving on to the actual analysis, it is, however, necessary to clarify how the *OED*⁵ works and explain the reasons why I have chosen to employ this dictionary when examining the selected near-synonyms.

4.1 The *Oxford English Dictionary*

The *OED*, which is today considered one of the largest dictionaries of the English language, began as a rather small project in 1857. The founders of the *OED* predicted the dictionary to be finished in about ten years, but the project turned out to take much longer than expected and it was not until 1928 that the last volume was published. As a historical dictionary, which traces the origin and development of individual English words, it is no wonder that it took so many years to be completed, given that living languages are in constant change.

⁵ The information about the *OED* in section 4.1 below is based on the data provided on *OED*’s web page: <http://public.oed.com/history-of-the-oed/>

It is precisely because the *OED* is a historical etymological dictionary that it will be used in order to examine the near-synonyms in this dissertation since, in contrast to most dictionaries, the emphasis lies not only on present-day meanings, but also on past meanings and etymology. To carry out a study from a diachronic perspective like the one proposed here, it is indispensable to account for both present and past meanings so as to determine how each member of selected the pairs or trios of near-synonyms have developed through time. Furthermore, the *OED* includes information about when a particular meaning was first documented, and whether that meaning is still in use today and includes around 3 million quotations from, for instance, classic literature, newspapers and film scripts. This can allow us to attain an idea of when the selected near-synonyms coexisted and competed with each other.

Although both print and electronic versions of the *OED* exist, the *OED* online 3rd edition is the one which is employed in this dissertation. The main reason for using the online edition is that it is easier to manage as it takes less time to look up the word one is searching for than if using the print version. Another advantage of the online edition is that it is being continuously revised and can therefore be taken as being more up to date than the printed one.

4.2 Examining the competition between near-synonyms from a diachronic perspective

In this section the following pairs or trios of near-synonyms are analyzed and discussed from a diachronic perspective: *fear/terror/trepidation*, *guard/ward*, *beck/stream* and *napkin/serviette*. The analysis of each of these groups of near-synonyms is divided into two parts, namely etymology, based on the *OED* entries, and a discussion, where I examine the competition between the near-synonyms and so attempt to trace how each

of them has developed in the language. A list of meanings of each word and quotation examples based on the *OED* entries are found in the appendices. Nonetheless, only the meanings which are discussed in the analysis, or appear in the corpora (cf. section 5.2) are accounted for in the appendices.

As previously mentioned, words typically change their meaning over time since meanings are flexible and can therefore be acquired or dropped rather easily (cf. section 3 above), and this can in fact be seen when looking at any *OED* entry of a word. When analyzing the pairs or trios of the near-synonyms in question, it can be noted that only some of their meanings coincide or have done so earlier in history, while most of other meanings are exclusive to solely one of the words. This fact can be explained by Katamba's (1994: 120) remark on synonyms:

Synonyms normally have closely related, but not necessarily identical, meanings. Indeed, total identity of meaning in all contexts (...) is very rare. Typically, certain senses of words may be synonymous, without all senses being synonymous. So, the synonyms cannot be freely exchanged for each other in all contexts.

The senses that will be discussed here in relation to the selected near-synonyms are those that have coexisted in two or more words for some time and for which there has been some sort of competition. For this reason, each discussion includes a table which makes clear which meanings of the near-synonyms seem to have coexisted and competed and, therefore, be taken into account in the discussion.

4.2.1 *Fear/terror/trepidation*

Fear

Etymology:

The noun *fear* (s.v. n.1) goes back to Old English *fáer* or *fér*, meaning 'sudden calamity, danger, peril' which in turn originates from Germanic **faéro-z*. The base *faèr-* derives from pre-Germanic *per-* which is, seemingly, an ablaut form of the Aryan⁶ root *per* 'to

⁶ An Indo-European language spoken by the so-called Aryan people around the 2nd millennium BC.

go through', although this origin is uncertain. Old English *fáer/fér* and Modern English *fear* are cognates with Old Saxon *fâr* 'ambush', Middle Dutch *vâre* 'fear', Old High German *fâr* 'ambush, danger' (also Middle High German *vâre*, *gevâere* and Modern German *gefahr* 'danger, threat, risk') and Old Norse *fâr* 'misfortune, plague'.

Terror

Etymology:

The noun *terror* entered English via Anglo-Norman *terror* and Middle French *terreur* in the 14th century. The French terms had derived from the Latin noun *terror*, 'fact or quality of inspiring dread' or 'person or thing that causes dread, extreme fear', which in turn came from the Latin verb *terrere* 'to frighten'. *Terror* has the same linguistic etymology as Old Occitan *terror*, Catalan *terror*, Spanish *terror*, Portuguese *terror*, Italian *terrore*, all being Romance languages which have evolved from Latin. Nonetheless, *terror* is also cognate with Dutch *terreur* and German *Terror*, since these two Germanic languages borrowed the French terms as well and began using them considerably in the 19th century, firstly by attributing it to the French revolution, and later on more generally in several different senses.

Trepidation

Etymology:

The most commonly mentioned source for this noun is Latin *trepidation-em*, a noun of action meaning 'agitation, alarm, trembling' which derived from the Latin verb *trepidare* 'to hurry, bustle, be agitated or alarmed'. However, it has also been discussed that English borrowed the term indirectly through Middle French *trepidation*. The word entered English at the beginning of the 17th century, some years after the verb *trepidate* of the same origin was introduced.

Discussion

Correlation meanings	Near-synonyms	<i>fear</i>	<i>terror</i>	<i>trepidation</i>
<i>fear</i> (2d) + <i>terror</i> (1)		<p>2d. A state of alarm or dread. Chiefly in phrase <i>in fear</i>; also, †<i>to put in (a) fear, to fall into fear</i></p> <p>First attested: 1297 Last attested: 1771</p>	<p>1. The state of being terrified or extremely frightened; intense fear or dread; an instance or feeling of this. Also in <i>in terror</i> (of something or someone)</p> <p>First attested: 1480 Last attested: 2009</p>	
<i>fear</i> (5d) + <i>terror</i> (2a)		<p>† 5d. An object of fear; something that is, or is to be, feared. In the Bible occas. by a Hebraism, the object of (a person's) religious reverence, the God of (his) worship</p> <p>First attested: 1535 Last attested: 1667</p>	<p>2a. The state or quality of being terrible or causing intense fear or dread; a thing or person that causes terror; something terrifying</p> <p>First attested: a1500 Last attested: 1999</p>	
<i>fear</i> (3a) and (2a) + <i>trepidation</i> (1)		<p>2a: The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil</p> <p>First attested: c1175 Last attested: 1875</p> <p>3a. Apprehension or dread of something that will or may happen in the future</p> <p>First attested: a1300 Last attested: 1884</p>		<p>1. A feeling of fear or anxiety about something that may happen (<i>OD</i>, s.v. <i>trepidation</i> 1)</p> <p>Fear or worry about what is going to happen (<i>CDO</i>, s.v. <i>trepidation</i>)</p>

Table 1: Coexistence of meanings of *fear*, *terror* and *trepidation*.

By having a close look at the entries of *fear*, *terror* and *trepidation* in the *OED*, it seems as if *fear* and *terror* are more closely related in terms of meaning in comparison with *trepidation*. The central meaning of the former two words refers to states or feelings of dread and anxiety, while *trepidation*, which was borrowed into English later

(cf. appendix 3, s.v. *trepidation* 1 and 2) instead appears to point more to the physical outcomes of those feelings, in other words to how the body reacts to such emotions.⁷ In view of the fact that *fear* and *terror* show more similarities in terms of meaning, I begin by examining these two near-synonyms, focusing on the two first correlations in Table 1 above, namely that of *fear* (2d) and *terror* (1) and that of *fear* (5d) and *terror* (2d).

Firstly, the term *fear*, of Old English origin, began to be used with this sense (2d) more or less two centuries before the French equivalent *terror* (1) came over to English. Moreover, it seems as if *fear* is not used in this sense very frequently, given that it was last recorded in the late 18th century (cf. appendix 1), while *terror*'s last documentation in the *OED* is from 2009 (cf. appendix 2).

Furthermore, by having a close look at the entries of *fear* (2a-d) in the *OED*, in particular at (2a), it seems as if these senses of *fear* (2a-d) underwent semantic change sometime after *terror* was introduced. This can be seen in the following statement in the *OED*: 'now the general term for all degrees of the emotion; in early use applied to its more violent extremes, now denoted by *alarm*, *terror*, *fright*, *dread*' (s.v. *fear* n.1 2a). In view of this, it seems rather clear that the French term at some point has displaced the earlier central meaning of *fear*.

It seems likely that *terror* (1), which came over to English via Anglo-Norman French around 1400 (cf. appendix 2), was a borrowing of prestige,⁸ since *fear* (2d) already existed in English with a similar meaning from the end of the 13th century (cf. appendix 1). Moreover, given that English borrowed extensively from Anglo-French during the period following the Norman Conquest, and that French was considered a superstratum while English was seen as a substratum, it is no wonder that it was the foreign word that

⁷ See appendix 1 (*fear* (2a-d)), appendix 2 (*terror* (1, 2a)) and appendix 3 (*trepidation* (1, 2)) for further clarification:

⁸ See section 2.1 on lexical borrowing for the difference between borrowings of prestige and borrowings of need.

came to displace the native one, and not the other way around. It has already been seen that a significant result of large-scale borrowing is the appearance of synonyms in the recipient language.⁹ This is the case of English, since many Old English words were either replaced or duplicated by French terms during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The terms *terror* (1) and *fear* (2d) are, thus, perfect examples of this duplication and synonymy which came to exist in English as a result of this huge influx of Norman words.

Although the two words must have competed for a while for the central meaning, it is evident, as previously mentioned, that sometime after the incorporation of *terror* (1) in the 15th century, *fear* (2a-d) underwent some sort of semantic change and acquired a particular nuance or connotation so as to make it different from the term *terror*.

As formerly pointed out, when a word from a superstratum ousts the central meaning of a word from a substratum, the new central meaning that the latter gains is generally less general than the old one (cf. section 3.3 above). This is, however, not the case of *fear* (2a-d), since the new meaning is more general than the old one. The semantic change which the word of Old English origin has therefore undergone is not that of specialization, but one of generalization (cf. section 3.3 above). *Fear* has been generalized because it has gone from denoting a particular intensity of the state or emotion of anxiety and dread, namely the violent extremes of it, to becoming, as stated in the *OED*, the common term for all degrees of the feeling.

The difference in nuance or connotation which has emerged can be confirmed when having a look at the entries of *fear* and *terror* in present-day English dictionaries, as for instance the *Cambridge Dictionary Online* (henceforth *CDO*) or *Oxford Dictionaries* (henceforth *OD*). In both dictionaries the main definition of *terror* is ‘extreme fear’

⁹ Cf. section 2.1 above.

(CDO, s.v. *terror*; OD, s.v. *terror* 1), while *fear* refers to the emotion as more generally: ‘an unpleasant emotion or thought that you have when you are frightened or worried by something dangerous, painful, or bad that is happening or might happen’ (CDO, s.v. *fear*) or ‘An unpleasant emotion caused by the threat of danger, pain, or harm’ (OD, s.v. *fear* 1). The semantic relationship which the two words nowadays seem to maintain is thus one of inclusion or so-called hyponymy, given that, as Katamba states, ‘the meaning of one [of the] term[s] is included in the meaning’ (1994: 119) of the other. When looking at the entries of the two words in the aforementioned present-day dictionaries, it becomes apparent that in this case it is the meaning of *fear* which is included in *terror*, making *terror* a hyponym of *fear*.

In spite of knowing that the term *fear* underwent a process of generalization sometime after *terror* (1) was introduced into English, it is difficult to establish when they stopped competing. Even by analyzing the quotations of *fear* (2a-d) provided in the *OED* it is not possible to determine which of the examples correspond to *fear* as denoting the violent extremes of the emotion and which refer to the feeling in a more general sense, since the difference in nuance which has come to exist is, indeed, very small.

As regards the comparison of *fear* (5d) and *terror* (2a),¹⁰ it can be seen that the two nouns acquired these almost exact senses in the same period, namely in the 16th century (cf. appendix 1 and 2). Given that only *terror* maintains this sense in the present-day it is very probable that the two near-synonyms competed for a while, and that *fear* (5d) sooner or later became displaced with such a meaning. As in the case of *fear* (2a) and *terror* (1), it is again the native Old English word which has ‘lost the competition’. However, contrary to *fear* (2a), this sense has not undergone semantic change, but

¹⁰ See Table 1 on *fear/terror/trepidation* above for the definition of these two senses.

instead seems to have ‘become less and less selected, and eventually discarded’ (Samuels, 1972: 62), in other words, it seems to have fallen out of use.

By analyzing the quotation examples of these two senses in the *OED* (cf. appendix 1, s.v. *fear* 5d and appendix 2, s.v. *terror* 2a), in contrast to *fear* (2d) and *terror* (1), it is possible to calculate approximately when the two near-synonyms competed with each other. Table 1 above shows that the first quotations of each word are from 1500 (*terror*) and 1535 (*fear*) respectively, while the last recorded use of *fear* (5d) is from 1667, that is, just about 130 years after it was first documented. It can thus be estimated that the two senses coexisted and competed for something more than a century until *fear* was ousted by *terror*, sometime during the second half of the 17th century.

The last part of the discussion of this trio of near-synonyms is devoted to the examination of the apparent coexistence between *fear* (2a) and (3a) and what seems to be a current sense of *trepidation* according to the *OD* and the *CDO* but which does not appear in the entry of the *OED*.¹¹ Although it was previously said that *trepidation* seemingly refers more to how the body reacts to emotions such as *fear* and *terror* than to the psychological impact of these feelings, the sense which appears first in both *OD* and the *CDO*,¹² refers to the emotion in itself with regard to the future outcome of a situation. In *OD* the sense which appears in the *OED*, namely that of ‘trembling movements or motion’ (*OD* s.v. *trepidation* 2), is, however, taken to be archaic.

If the sense of *trepidation* which appears first in the *OD* and in the *CDO* is today taken to be the central meaning of the word, while those that appear in the *OED* are considered archaic, the word can be taken as an exact synonym of *fear* (2a) or (3a), which are very similar in terms of their conceptual meaning (cf. meanings in Table 1 above) in present times. Although *fear* (2a) and (3a) are last attested in 1875 and 1884

¹¹ See Table 1 above for the definition of these two senses.

¹² See Table 1 above.

respectively, according to the quotation examples of this sense in the *OED*, they do not appear as being either archaic or obsolete today (cf. appendix 1 and 2). Moreover, in *OD* or *CDO* this sense of *fear* (2a, 3a) appears as one of the first listed meanings of the word. This can thus be taken as likely confirmation of the competition of the two words in the present-day. As mentioned in the introduction, a practical part is included in section 5.2 of this dissertation where the selected near-synonyms are investigated in terms of usage by employing data from two contemporary corpora. I will try to determine there whether *fear* (3a) and *trepidation* can be freely exchanged with this sense in particular or if ‘some difference in meaning, connotation, nuance or register’ (Samuels, 1972: 62) does exist between them.

4.2.2. *Guard/ward*

Guard

Etymology

The term *guard* came over to English at the beginning of the 15th century from Middle French *garde* (variant of *guard*, see <gu->¹³) which, in turn had derived from Old French *garder* ‘to keep, maintain, preserve, protect’ (compare with Old Northern French *warder*). Middle French *garde* and *garde* are cognates with Italian *guarda* and Spanish *guarda* since they can be traced back to Romance **guarda*. However, **guarda* is a borrowing from Old Germanic **wardâ* (**wardo-*) ‘to guard’, so, as a result, these four Romance terms ultimately all go back to this proto-Germanic word.

Ward

Etymology

¹³ In Middle English a silent <-u> was occasionally introduced in foreign words, particularly of French origin, where <g-> was followed by a vowel in order to symbolize hardness, given that in words of English origin <g-> followed by certain vowels generally had a soft pronunciation. For this reason, some words of Germanic origin containing <-w->, which came over to English through Central French, became <gu-> instead of simply <g-> (Harper, 2014: s.v. *gu-*).

The term *ward* can be said to have a rather complex etymology since some of the word's meanings go back to the Old English period and Old English *weard*, which derives from Germanic **wardô*, while other senses of the word were incorporated centuries later through the Old Northern French form *warde*. The original Germanic term was initially borrowed into Romance languages as for instance Old Northern French. English later borrowed some of the Old Northern French senses of the term in the Middle English period. *Ward*, as a result, has several cognates in both Germanic and Romance languages, as for instance Middle Low German *warde*, High German *warton* and Old Norse *varde* and *varda*, Spanish *guarda* and Provençal *garda*.

Discussion

Correlation Meanings	Near-Synonyms	<i>guard</i>	<i>ward</i>
<i>guard</i> (7a) + <i>ward</i> (n.1)		<p>7a. One who keeps, protects, or defends; a protector, defender; <i>spec.</i> one of a guard (sense 9), a sentry, sentinel; a warder in a prison or other place of detention (chiefly U.S.). Also with preceding n. denoting the object defended, as COAST-GUARD n., <i>telegraph guard</i>, etc.</p> <p>First attested: 1412 Last attested: 1968</p>	<p>† <i>Obs.</i> A watchman, guard, keeper, warden.</p> <p>Common in Old English (often applied to God, as in <i>rodora weard</i>, keeper of the skies). Later, chiefly as the second element in compounds, as <i>bear-</i>, <i>gate-</i>, <i>hay-</i>, <i>mill-</i>, <i>woodward</i></p> <p>First attested: a680 Last attested: 1473</p>
<i>guard</i> (4a) + <i>ward</i> n.2 (I 1)		<p>4a. The condition or fact of guarding, protecting, or standing on the defensive; watch; <i>esp.</i> in <i>to keep ward</i>. Hence, the special service of watching performed by a soldier or sailor</p> <p>First attested: 1596 Last attested: 1876</p>	<p>I. Action of watching or guarding</p> <p>1. The action or function of a watchman, sentinel, or the like; observation for the purpose of discovering the approach of danger; look-out, watch, guard; also, surveillance (...) Now <i>Arch.</i></p> <p>First attested: OE</p>

		Last attested: 1835
<i>guard</i> (3a.) + <i>ward</i> n.2 (III 8a)	3a. <i>Sword-exercise, Boxing,</i> etc. A posture of defence; hence, the weapons or arms in such a posture. <i>at open guard:</i> in a position which leaves the swordsman open to attack First attested: 1601 Last attested: 1897	III. Defence 8a. <i>Fencing.</i> A defensive posture or movement; a mode of parrying Cf. GUARD n. 3 First attested: a1586 Last attested: 1810
<i>guard</i> (9a) + <i>ward</i> n.2 (IV 11)	9a. A body of persons, esp. soldiers (†also <i>occas.</i> ships) engaged to preserve a person or place from injury or attack, to act as an escort, or keep watch over prisoners: with reference to military sentry duty (...) First attested: a1513 Last attested: 1887	IV. A body of guards 11. A company of watchmen or guards. Cf. GUARD n. 9 . Now <i>rare</i> First attested: c1000 Last attested: 1870
<i>guard</i> (16b) + <i>ward</i> n.2 (VI 23)	16b. The part of the hilt of a sword that protects the hand, often of curious workmanship or elaborate design First attested: 1596 Last attested: 1898	VI. An appliance for guarding. † 23. The part of the hilt of a sword that protects the hand: = GUARD n. 16b . <i>Obs.</i> First attested: 1634 Last attested: 1634

Table 2: Coexistence of meanings of *guard* and *ward*.

By analyzing the entries of *guard* and *ward* (n.1 and n.2) in the *OED* in detail, it can be seen that several of the senses of the two terms either are synonyms in the present-day or have been so at some point in the history of English. As mentioned above, when discussing the etymology of *ward*, some of this word's meanings originate from Old English *weard*, while other more recent senses go back to Old North French *warde*. The first part of the discussion that follows is devoted to the examination of the apparent

correlations which have existed between meanings of *ward* of Old English origin and some senses of *guard*.¹⁴

Firstly, as regards the seeming coexistence between *guard* (7a) and *ward* n.1, it can be said that the latter came to be displaced and later on become obsolete as a result of *guard* being borrowed from French with a very similar meaning in the early 15th century (cf. appendix 4, s.v. *guard* 7a). The term *ward*, which had been in use in the language for over 700 years¹⁵ before *guard* was introduced, was as explicitly mentioned in the *OED*, ‘very common in Old English’ (s.v. *ward* n.1). Nonetheless, once the French term was borrowed, it did not take very long before *ward* fell out of use. By looking closely at the quotations in the *OED* it is possible to estimate that the two terms competed for less than a century until *guard* took over the central meaning of *ward*. According to the quotations, *guard* was first documented in English in 1412, while the last attestation of *ward* is dated 1473 (cf. appendix 4, s.v. *ward* n.1 and appendix 5, s.v. *guard* 7a). This can therefore be taken as a likely confirmation of *ward* n.1 being replaced sometime in the late 15th century or at the beginning of the 16th century.

As regards the correlation between *guard* (4a) and *ward* n.2 (I 1), it can be said that the case is very similar to that of *guard* (7a) and *ward* n.1 discussed above. It seems as if *ward*, which existed in this sense already in the Old English period, was ousted by *guard* even though it is not noted as obsolete today, but rather as archaic. Moreover, apart from merely having very similar definitions, the two words seem to have been employed in similar types of phrases, since both collocated specially with the verb *keep*, in ‘keep guard’ and ‘keep ward’.¹⁶ When examining the quotations in the *OED*, it is made evident that the terms competed for this meaning for a longer time than *guard* (7a)

¹⁴ *Guard* (7a) and *ward* n.1, *guard* (4a) and *ward* n.2 (I 1) and *guard* (9a) and *ward* n.2 (IV 11).

¹⁵ It was first documented in a680 in *CAEDMON Hymn 1* according to the *OED* (cf. appendix 5, s.v. *ward* n.1)

¹⁶ See Table 2 for further clarification.

and *ward* n.1, given that *ward* n.1 (I 1) continued to be used in English until the 19th century, since it was last documented in 1835 (cf. appendix 5).

Moving on to the comparison between *guard* (9a) and *ward* n.2 (IV 11), by having a look at the quotations in the *OED*, it seems as if they are still competing today even though *ward* is noted as rare. As in the two previous cases,¹⁷ it is *ward*, of Old English origin, which seems to be losing the competition: although none of them is noted as obsolete, despite both being last documented in the latter half of the 19th century according to the *OED*, *ward* is the only of the two which is characterized as rare (cf. appendix 4, s.v. *guard* 9a and appendix 5, s.v. *ward* n.2 IV 11). In section 5.2 below, where the pairs and trios of near-synonyms are investigated by using contemporary corpora, I will try to establish whether these two terms are still competing for this sense today.

As mentioned at the beginning of this discussion, some of the senses of *ward* can be traced back to Old Northern French rather than to Old English. The last part of the analysis of this pair of near-synonyms is devoted to the coexistence of the two senses of *ward*, originating from Old Northern French and *guard*, of Central French origin.

The definitions of *guard* (3a) and *ward* n.2 (III 8a) are very similar, given that both refer to a defensive posture within a sport. Nonetheless, when introducing the different ranges of meanings that any word typically has (cf. section 3.1 above), it was said that different words may share the same conceptual meaning but differ in any of the five remaining types of meaning. This seems to be the case with this sense of *guard* and *ward* as they denote the same action, namely that of ‘posture of defense’ (*OED*, s.v. *guard* 3a and *ward* n.2 III 8a), but are applied in different sports, *guard* in sword-exercise and boxing and *ward* in fencing (cf. Table 2 above). The two terms can

¹⁷ See *guard* (7a) and *ward* n.1 and *guard* (4a) and *ward* n.2 (I 1) above.

therefore be said to differ in connotative meaning, since they are associated with different sports. Furthermore, as seen in this definition of *guard*, the term is usually employed in the phrase *at open guard*, meaning ‘in a position which leaves the swordsman open to attack’ (*OED*, s.v. *guard* 3a) where *ward* cannot be used. However, even if the two words may still exist as near-synonyms today, differing only in connotation, none of the two seems to be very common in English today, given that none of them has been documented in the *OED* since the 19th century, the last examples dating from 1810 and 1897 respectively (cf. appendix 4, s.v. *guard* 3a and appendix 5, s.v. *ward* n.2 III 8a).

The last correlation between this pair of near-synonyms which will be discussed here is that of *guard* (16b) and *ward* n.2 (VI 23). By looking at the quotations in the *OED*, we see that *guard* was introduced before *ward* in this sense, being first documented in 1596, almost 40 years before *ward* (cf. appendix 4 and 5). This can be taken as rather surprising, given that Northern Anglo French was the principal source of borrowing in English during the epoch directly following the Norman Conquest, while the influence of Central French came later.¹⁸ We can see how the two terms must have been considered exact synonyms for a short period of time since their definitions coincide precisely: ‘The part of the hilt of a sword that protects the hand’ (*OED*, s.v. *guard* 16b and *ward* n.2 VI 23). Nonetheless, since only one example of *ward* in this sense appears in the *OED*, it seems likely that the two terms did not compete long for this meaning, but rather that *ward* lost the competition almost directly when it entered English and therefore fell out of use.

¹⁸ For further information see section 2.2.4 above.

4.2.3. Beck/stream

Beck

Etymology

The term *beck* came over to English via Old Norse *bekk-r* ‘brook, rivulet’, from which Swedish *bäck* and Dutch *bæk* has also evolved. The Old Norse term originated from Germanic **bakki*, cognate with **baki-z*. Several Germanic words have evolved from the latter one, such as Old English *beçe*, Old Saxon *beki*, Middle Dutch *bēke*, Dutch *beek*, Old High German *bah* and Modern German *bach*. Moreover, no form of this word has been found outside the Germanic languages.

Stream

Etymology

Although the modern English term *stream* goes back particularly to Old English *stréam* ‘a course of water’, since it entered the language directly through this Old English notion, this word is of common Germanic origin, existing in all Germanic languages except Gothic. Old English *stréam*, therefore, has the same linguistic derivation as Old Frisian *strâm* (also West Frisian *stream* and North Frisian *strôm* or *strum*), Old Saxon *strôm* (<Dutch *stroom*), Old High and Middle High German *stroum* (<Modern German *strom*), Old Norse *straum-r* (<Swedish *ström*, Danish *strøm* and Norwegian *straum*), which can all be traced back to Germanic **straumo-z* and pre-Germanic **stroumo-s*.

These Germanic prototypic notions in turn have derived from the Indo-Germanic root **srou-*, **sreu-* or **sru-* meaning ‘to flow’. The term, as a result, has several cognates outside the Germanic languages, as for instance, Sanskrit *sru* ‘to flow’ and *sruta* ‘fluid’, Greek *ῥέ(φ)ειν* ‘to flow’, *ῥεῦμα* ‘a flow’ and *ῥό(φ)ος* ‘current’, Old Church Slavonic and Russian *struja* ‘stream’, Old Irish *struaim* ‘stream’ and *sruth* (also Middle Welsh *frut* and Modern Welsh *ffrwd*) ‘stream’.

Discussion

Correlation meanings	Near-Synonyms	<i>beck</i>	<i>stream</i>
<i>beck</i> (1) + <i>stream</i> (1a)		<p>1. A brook or stream; the ordinary name in those parts of England from Lincolnshire to Cumbria which were occupied by the Danes and Norwegians</p> <p>First attested: a1400 Last attested: 1872</p>	<p>1a. A course of water flowing continuously along a bed on the earth, forming a river, rivulet, or brook</p> <p>First attested: c875 Last attested: 1871</p>

Table 3: Coexistence of meanings of *beck* and *stream*.

The case of this pair of synonyms is slightly different from the two discussed previously,¹⁹ since *beck* n.1 (1) and *stream* (1a) seem to be exact synonyms in many contexts, differing not in ‘meaning, connotation, nuance or register’ (Samuels, 1972:62), but rather in which variety of English they are employed. By analyzing the senses of the two terms it is possible to discern that *beck*, of Old Norse origin, is used only in the Northern parts of the United Kingdom. This is the part of the British Isles which the Vikings plundered and where they later settled down, and which came to be known as the Danelaw in the late Old English period (cf. section 2.2.1 above). On the contrary, *stream*, originating from Old English, does not appear as being restricted to a particular variety of English and is thus considered as the standardized form. *Beck* seems to be one of the large number of Scandinavian words which are preserved in the Northern and Eastern varieties of British English, but which never accomplished to spread to Standard English.

Furthermore, it must be noted that *beck* can be regarded as a common, everyday word, which refers to a natural phenomenon: ‘a brook or stream’ (OED, s.v. *beck* n.1 1). As mentioned in section 2.1 above, words which are borrowed between languages

¹⁹ See *fear/terror/trepidation* and *guard/ward* in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 respectively.

which maintain a so-called adstratal relationship often relate to every-day vocabulary. Therefore, *beck* can be said to be a prototypical representative of Old Norse borrowings, which corresponds to the relationship of equals maintained by the Vikings and the Anglo-Saxons, in other words, to an adstratal relationship.

Although it can be said that *beck* (1) and *stream* (1a) are different from the other cases of near-synonyms discussed so far, since they are often believed to be exact synonyms and are therefore, interchangeably in many contexts, *beck* (1) has, however, experienced semantic change. A close look at its definition in the *OED* reveals that it has undergone the process of specialization²⁰ in the field of literature: ‘often used *spec.* in literature to connote a brook with stony bed, or rugged course, such as are those of the north country’ (s.v. *beck* n.1 1). Following this remark, we see that *beck* is sometimes used when referring to a particular kind of stream or brook, to be precise, to those with ‘stony bed, or rugged course’ which are characteristic of the Northern parts of England. It has thus acquired a slight different nuance which seems to serve in order to differentiate it from Standard English *stream*.

In addition, it has to be pointed out that by looking at the meanings of *beck* and *stream* (cf. appendix 6 and 7), it can be appreciated that *stream* is used in many more senses than its doublet, which has only two documented meanings in the *OED*. Therefore, *beck* is only synonymous with one of the many meanings of *stream*, namely that of (1a), so that precisely as Katamba states, this pair shows that ‘typically, [only] certain senses of words are synonymous, without all senses being’ (1994: 120) so.

²⁰ For the definition of this concept see section 3.3 above.

4.2.4. *Napkin/serviette*

Napkin

Etymology

Modern English *napkin*, introduced into English in the late 14th century, is a combination formed from the noun *nape* and the Middle English suffix *-kin*.

English *nape* ‘a tablecloth’, which is now obsolete or rare in English, is of obscure origin, even though it is believed to derive from Anglo-Norman *nape* or *nap* ‘tablecloth, cloth cover, towel’ or Middle French *nape*. These French words, in turn, go back to Old French *nappe* and classical Latin *mappa*. The reason why the initial consonant was changed from <m-> to <n-> was that in post-classical Latin some labials underwent dissimilation before other labials (in this case before <-p>) and were therefore replaced with a nasal such as <-n>. Nonetheless, even though the most liable origin of the English word is French *nape* or *nap*, it has also been said to have evolved directly from the Latin forms *napa* or *nappa* already in the 12th or 13th century respectively.

The Middle English suffix *-kin* ‘little’, typically used to form diminutives, although of rare use, is believed to have been borrowed from Middle Dutch *-kijn* or *-ken* in the Middle English period, since there is no evidence that it existed in Old English. Apart from being cognate with the aforementioned Middle Dutch forms, it also corresponds to Middle Low German *-kîn*, Old High German *-chin*, Middle High German *-chîn*, *-chein*, *-chin* and *-chen* and Modern German *-chen*.

The suffix was first introduced in English around 1250 and then only in personal names (particularly male names) such as *Janekin*, *Malekin* and *Waterkin*. These names are thought to be adaptations or reproductions of Dutch or Flemish names. Notwithstanding, these names fell out of use at the beginning of the 15th century and can today only be found in surnames, often together with the typical surname suffixes *-s* or *-son*, as in *Dickinson*, *Watkins* and *Jenkins*. In the 14th century the suffix *-kin* began to

be added to nouns, possibly on analogy with personal names, forming derivatives, as for instance *napkin*, *dodkin*, *bodkin* and *firkin*. It is doubtful whether they are of Dutch or obscure origin, and it is unclear if they were all felt to be diminutives at the time. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that Modern English *napkin* is not seen as a diminutive today.²¹

Serviette

Etymology

The noun *serviette* entered English via French *serviette* ‘a towel, table-napkin’ in the 15th century. It was then only used in Scottish in the forms of *serviot* and *serviat* and later from the 16th to the 18th century as *servite*, *servet* and *serviet*. It was not until the 19th century that it was reintroduced with the original French and current spelling *serviette* and began to be used in other English varieties, initially only as a foreign term. For the following two centuries it started to be seen as naturalized, although it has lately begun to be thought of as vulgar.

The French term *serviette* from which the English word has evolved is of obscure formation, but could possibly have originated from the French verb *server* ‘to serve’. This French verb in turn goes back to the Latin verb *servire* ‘to be a servant or slave’ and the Latin noun *servus* ‘slave, servant’.

Discussion

Correlations meanings	Near-Synonyms	<i>napkin</i>	<i>serviette</i>
<i>napkin</i> (1a) + <i>serviette</i> (1)		1a. A usually square piece of cloth, paper, etc., used at a meal to wipe the fingers and lips and to protect the clothes (also	A table-napkin; also, †a slip-cloth First attested: 1489

²¹ The Old French diminutive of *nappe* and *nape* was *naperon* ‘small tablecloth’ from which the English noun *apron* meaning ‘an article of dress, worn in front of the body so as to protect the clothes from dirty or injury, or simply as a covering’, has evolved.

	occas., to place dishes on); a table napkin.Cf. SERVIETTE n. First attested: 1384-5 Last attested: 2000	Last attested: 1906
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Table 4: Coexistence of meanings of *napkin* and *serviette*.

From the end of the 15th century, when the term *serviette* was borrowed into English, until the 19th century, the pair of near-synonyms *napkin/serviette* was very similar to that of *beck/stream* presented in section 4.2.3 above. The usage of *serviette* (1), then with a number of different spellings, was during these centuries restricted to a particular variety of English, namely to Scottish English²² and did therefore coexist in English as a vernacular form together with the more standardized *napkin* (1a). In contrast to *beck*, of Old Norse origin, it can be considered rather strange that *serviette* was used merely in Scottish English since French loanwords, contrarily to Scandinavian ones, were typically not restricted to a specific area, but did instead spread from the capital to other parts of the country (cf. section 2.2.3 above).

At some point in the 19th century, the term *serviette* was, however, just as stated in the *OED*, ‘re-introduced with the French spelling’ (s.v. *serviette*) , and thus began to compete with *napkin* (1a) since it started being used in varieties other than Scottish English. During the following centuries it was regarded as naturalized, but, according to the *OED*, it seems to have begun to be considered as vulgar lately, and may therefore be taken as losing the competition with *napkin* in the present-day. If *serviette*, just as the *OED* states, is seen as carrying a vulgar connotation today, it is very probable that it has undergone a semantic change known as pejoration (cf. section 3.3 above). If this is the case, a difference in connotative meaning has most likely come to exist between the two terms so as to distinguish them. Furthermore, it is also very likely that *serviette* has

²² See the etymology of the term *serviette* in this same section.

acquired a different affective meaning, given that the evaluation or attitude which the word transmits is that of a more offensive or less respectable connotation.²³

By analyzing the quotations in the *OED* (cf. appendix 9, s.v. *serviette*), it seems that the two near-synonyms in question have developed differently in the course of the last century in what concerns their connotations. This is made clear by having a close look at the last example of *serviette* documented in the *OED* dated 1906 (cf. example (1) below). This example shows that it seemingly makes a difference whether a person chooses to use the word *serviette* or *napkin*. The author of *Letters to Daughter* means that an individual is of a special sort if employing the term *serviette* instead of *napkin*, and although it is not made clear what the connotation of ‘sort’ is in this example, it is easy to perceive that the close synonyms have different connotations.

1. 1906 H. BLAND [*Lett. to Daughter*](#) 53, I think..she was the sort who would call a table napkin a serviette. (*OED*, s.v. *serviette* γ.)

To conclude this discussion, even though it may seem as if it is the French term which is now losing the competition, in contrast to the cases of *fear/terror/trepidation* discussed above (cf. section 4.2.1), where the native term was displaced, this is not exactly the case. It can be seen that *napkin* is of Romance origin, despite the fact that the suffix *-kin* most probably derives from a Germanic source, since it, as well as *serviette*, can be traced back to both French and Latin (cf. etymology of *napkin* above).

5. Investigation of present-day usage of the selected near-synonyms

In chapter 4 the development of each member of the pairs or trios of near-synonyms throughout the history of English has been discussed by focusing on their etymology,

²³ See section 3.1 above for further information about connotative meaning.

their meanings through time and the competition between the near-synonyms. The present chapter is devoted to the analysis of the present-day usage of the selected near-synonyms by making use of two computerized contemporary corpora, namely *British English 2006* (henceforth *BE06*) and *American English 2006* (henceforth *AmE06*).

5.1 The *BE06* and *AmE06* Corpora

The *BE06* and the *AmE06* corpora²⁴ belong to the so called Brown Family of corpora. Both are one million word corpora consisting of general published contemporary written British and American English respectively, and have been compiled by Paul Baker, professor at Lancaster University in the United Kingdom. The same sampling frame as some of the previous corpora in the Brown Family²⁵ has been employed. This means that *BE06* and *AmE06* are made up of 500 texts of 2000 word samples from 15 different genres of writing.²⁶

These two corpora, in particular *BE06*, were compiled in view of the fact that the FLOB corpus was no longer seen as a rigorous portrayal of the present-day usage of English. Although both corpora include texts from the whole first decade of the new millennium, most of the files included correspond to the time span between 2005 and 2007, making 2006 the median point, thereof the names *BE06* and *AmE06*. It is precisely because the texts included in these corpora are so recent that they have been chosen to carry out the present analysis. They will thus serve to examine how each member of the near-synonyms are employed in written English in the present-day, but

²⁴ The information about *BE06* and *AmE06* provided in this section is based on the corpus documentation of the corpora: http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/groups/crg/files/CRG-w28-Baker_slides.pdf.

²⁵ The LOB and Brown, and the FLOB and Frown corpora, compiled in the 1970's and 1990's respectively.

²⁶ The different text-types are the following: Press: Reportage (A); Press: Editorial (B); Press: Reviews (C); Religion (D); Skills, Trades and Hobbies (E); Popular Lore (F); Belles Lettres, Biographies, Essays (G); Miscellaneous: Gov. docs, industrial reports etc (H); Academic prose (J); General Fiction (K); Mystery and Detective Fiction (L); Science Fiction (M); Adventure and Western (N); Romance and Love Story (P); Humor (R).

also if they essentially show variation in usage or whether they may be used interchangeably in some contexts. Furthermore, since the focus of the two corpora lie on contemporary British and American English respectively, it can be interesting to check whether differences exist as regards the usage of the near-synonyms in question in the two major varieties of English.

5.1.1 Some issues concerning the methodology employed

The focus of this dissertation lies on the pairs or trios of the near-synonyms which are used as nouns. Precisely for this reason, and given that both the *BE06* and the *AmE06* make a distinction between different forms in the search result, I took into account only the examples found under the categories NN1, NN2 and JJ in this analysis and disregarded all the other types. NN1 and NN2 correspond to the nouns, singular and plural respectively, while JJ accounts for some compound words made up by the terms searched for in the corpora.²⁷

Despite disregarding the types which did not correspond to nouns, I have found some problems when examining the occurrences in the corpora one by one. Firstly, there seems to be a number of mistakes in the corpora, given that in some of the examples the words searched for are not used as nouns. The four examples below serve to illustrate the kind of errors found in the corpora:

1. *On the strength of his 2004 bestseller, State of **Fear**, the novelist was invited to testify in 2005 before a US Senate committee investigating climate change.* (BE06 F23)
2. *It made her **fear** that her father had been overawed by this much younger man.* (BE06 P09)
3. *The Gore-Tex XCR liner and full tongue gusset **wards** off wet snow and and water from stream crossings with ease, and the well-padded upper repels ankle-biter rocks, sand, and grit.* (AmE06 E13)
4. *In addition to the traditional monotonic progression of the classic straight-line assimilation framework, then, today's immigrants also face the distinct possibility of experiencing down **ward** mobility (Gans 1992).* (AmE06 J25)

²⁷ Consider, for example, *10-napkin* and *napkin-like* in section 5.2.4 below.

Example (1) will not be taken into account in the analysis since *fear* appears in the title of a book, while in examples (2) and (3) *fear* and *ward off* are used as verbs. In example (4) *ward* is part of the compound *downward* which cannot be analyzed in terms of the meanings of *ward* listed in the *OED* (cf. appendix 5).

Moreover, given that often different senses of a word are closely related and very similar, as can be seen in the entries of the *OED*, it is sometimes difficult to identify the sense to which a particular example in the corpora corresponds. In other examples, the context or format of the text makes it hard to determine the sense a word is used in:

5. *The English feared Welsh uprisings, a **fear** that intersected with apprehension that the French and the Scots would employ Wales as a threshold for attacking England.* (AmE06 J68)
6. *Getting More Specific - Current Happenings: Transiting Pluto (**terror**, pressure), ruler of H12 (secrets) from H2 (money), is in H1 (image) finishing its t-square to our afflicted Neptune, ruler of intercepted H3 (cars), in H9 (always the issue of dependency upon foreign oil), and Mars (war) in H7 (open enemies).* (AmE06 F03)

In example (5) it is very difficult to establish whether *fear* is used in sense 2a or 3a, since there is a very thin line between the two meanings, while in example (6) the context or format of the text makes it difficult to determine how *terror* is being used.

For the reasons just explained, in what follows I present an overview of the results achieved from the analysis by making use of graphs in each discussion. This will be done in order to provide a frequency breakdown of the meanings of the near-synonyms.

5.2 Analyzing the corpora

5.2.1 Fear/terror/trepidation

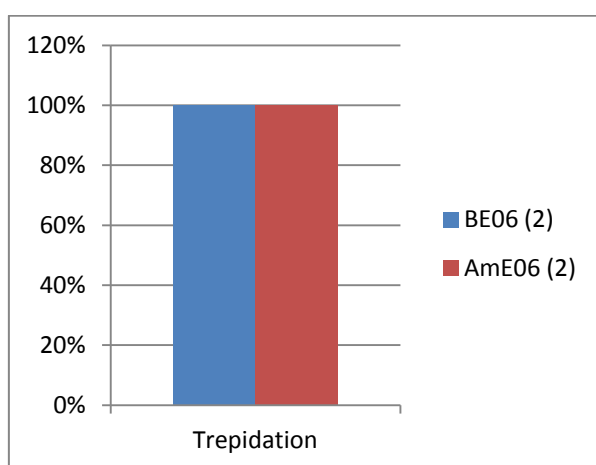
Before starting with the discussion of the results obtained from the analysis of this trio of near-synonyms, some occurrences which have been disregarded will be mentioned. As seen in the graphs 2 and 3 below, there is one instance of *terror* in *AmE06* and seven of *fear*, six in *BE06* and one in *AmE06*, that are noted as non applicable. These instances are excluded for different reasons. The occurrence of *terror*, seen in example (5) in

section 5.1.1, is difficult to figure out because of the context and format. Five instances of *fear* are used in titles or names, as in example (1) above (cf. section 5.1.1), and the remaining instance contains a verb rather than a noun (cf. example (2) section 5.1.1).

The occurrence of *fear* in *AmE06* which is not being considered is example (7) below:

7. *But if you remember what / can do with one of these things" - she held up her ring- "then you should fear me! "At the word **fear**, Grant heard the man topple, screaming and begging.*
(AmE06 N10)

This instance of *fear* is not being taken into account since it refers back to the verb *fear* in the previous clause.



Graph 1: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *trepidation*.

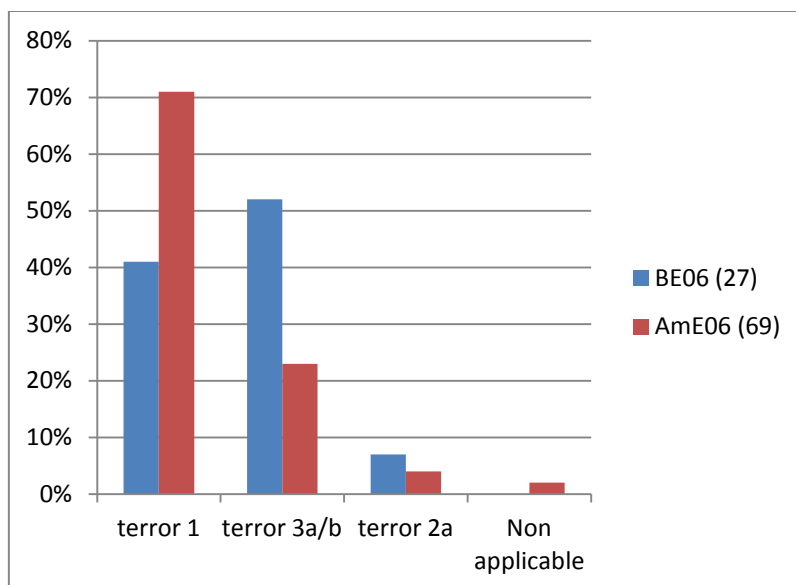
Moving on the actual discussion, there are very few instances of *trepidation* if compared to *fear* and *terror*, only two occurrences in each corpus as seen in graph 1 above. Furthermore, All four instances of *trepidation* seem to be used in the sense which appears in the *OD* and *CDO*,²⁸ taken as a synonym of *fear* (2a) and (3a), while there are no corpus examples of the senses listed in the *OED*:

8. *The English feared Welsh uprisings, a fear that intersected with apprehension that the French and the Scots would employ Wales as a threshold for attacking England. This **trepidation** mounted rapidly after the resumption of the Hundred Years War in 1367, producing English garrisons at most Welsh castles in the 1370s.* (AmE06 J68)

In this example it can be appreciated how *trepidation* is used as an exact synonym of *fear* (3a) or (2a), appearing in the preceding clause. Nonetheless, seeing that there are

²⁸ *OD*: 'a feeling of fear or anxiety about something that may happen (s.v. *trepidation* 1).
CDO: 'fear or worry about what is going to happen' (s.v. *trepidation*).

many more instances of both *fear* (3a) and (2a)²⁹ than there is of *trepidation* in both corpora, it seems rather clear that *fear* is the most commonly employed word in both varieties of English.



Graph 2: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *terror*.

Continuing with the instances of *terror*, there seems to be a significant difference in the number of occurrences between the two corpora, with more occurrences of the word in *AmE06* than in *BE06* (cf. graph 2 above). Nonetheless, when having a look at the senses with which the word is used, both seem to coincide almost exactly. *Terror* (3), in particular 3a and 3b, are the most frequently used meanings in both corpora. In *BE06*, 14 (52%) of the 27 instances correspond to this sense, while 49 (72%) of the 68 occurrences correspond to it in *AmE06*. Of these 49 occurrences 24, almost 50%, appear in the phrase *war on terror*. What is interesting about this use is that it is very often employed in the three different press types (types A, B and C in footnote 26 above), as in examples (9) and (10) below, in contrast to the other senses of *terror* which are frequently used in the remaining genres:

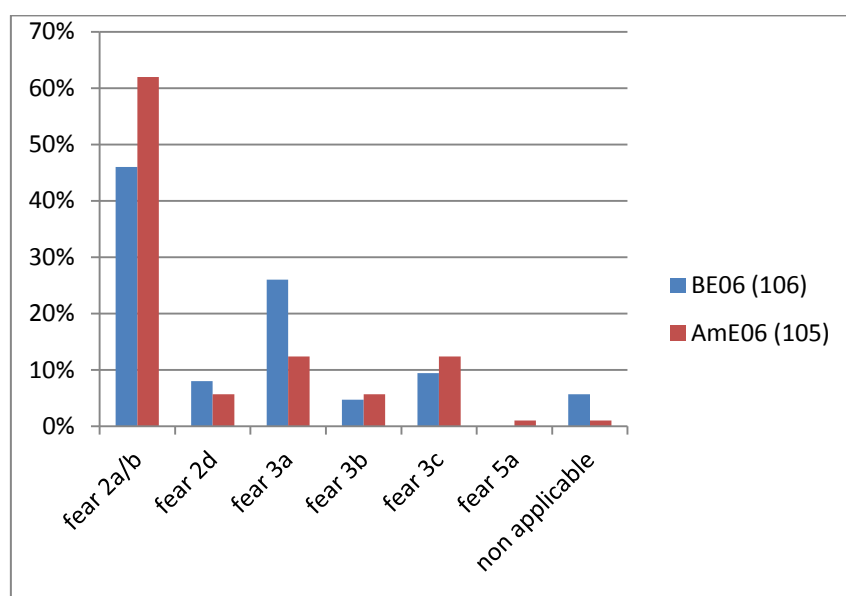
9. "Meanwhile a global security think-tank warned there was "every prospect" of the War On **Terror** lasting 30 YEARS. (BE06 A09)
10. Trying detainees in the war on **terror**. (AmE06 B03)

²⁹ Cf. graph 3 below.

The second most used meaning of *terror* in both corpora, with a fairly high percentage, is sense 1, illustrated in examples (11) and (12), taken as being synonymous with *fear* (2d) which is discussed below:

11. *When we boarded the boat to Haiphong, I reflected in **terror** over what I had done.* (AmE06 K29)
12. *A panic-stricken voice gibbered in **terror** three paces from where I sat, naked and trembling in my bed.* (BE06 L05)

There are also some instances of *terror* (2), especially (2a), in both corpora. This sense was discussed in section 4.2.1 above, given that it seems to have displaced and ousted one sense of *fear*, namely 5d as it is noted as obsolete in the *OED*. Even though *terror* does not seem to be used in this sense very often, since there are only two and three instances of this use in the British and American English corpora respectively, it can be taken as a likely confirmation of *terror* having replaced this sense of *fear*, as no instance of *fear* (5d) is documented in any of the two corpora.



Graph3: overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *fear*.

Moving on to the results of the noun *fear*, by having a look at the total number of instances in both corpora, it is clear that it is the member of this trio of near-synonyms which seems to be most commonly used in both varieties of English (compare graph 3 with graphs 1 and 2 above).

The meanings of *fear* which seem to be employed most in the present-day by having a look at both corpora are sense 2 (in particular 2a) and sense 3 (especially 3a and 3c):

13. Sense 2a: *She saw sudden **fear** in Natalija's eyes as the woman realized too late she had miscalculated, that a body in motion stays in motion.* (AmE06 L11)
14. Sense 3a: *To the lower middle class, so desperate to be more middle than lower, bankruptcy was a stain one which, intensified by the **fear** that it would happen again, spread through Victor's early years.* (BE06 G32)
15. Sense 3c: ***Fear** of heights is another trait that will never leave me.* (BE06 G42)

As discussed earlier on in this section, *fear* (2a) and (3a) are seemingly synonymous with *trepidation*, and just as *trepidation* could be interchanged with *fear* in example (8) above, *fear* can possibly be freely interchanged with *trepidation* in example (13) and (14). As a result, it seems as if, as noted in the discussion in section 4.2.1, *trepidation* and *fear* are competing for this sense in the present, although *fear* is probably used more often, at least from what can be gathered from the data in the corpora used in this dissertation.

Meaning 2d of *fear*, considered as synonymous with *terror* (1) discussed above appears in both corpora, but not as commonly as *terror* (1). In addition, it is usually employed in the phrase *in fear* just as sense 1 of *terror* is used in *in terror*. By having a look at the examples of this sense of *fear* in the corpora, it is, however, unclear if *fear* is freely interchangeable with *terror* (1). *Terror* (1) is probably used to denote an instance of ‘intense fear or dread’ (*OED*, s.v. *terror* 1), while *fear* is most likely employed to indicate a more general ‘state of alarm or dread’ (*OED*, s.v. *fear* 2d).³⁰ This slight difference in nuance or degree of the emotion is, however, very difficult to appreciate in the examples.³¹

16. *If I met him at the crossroads, I'd turn the other way in **fear**, because he was a bit reckless.* (BE06 G43)
17. *In 1673, a party traveled down the Mississippi to the mouth of the Arkansas River, turning back in **fear** of Spanish opposition.* (AmE06 F36)

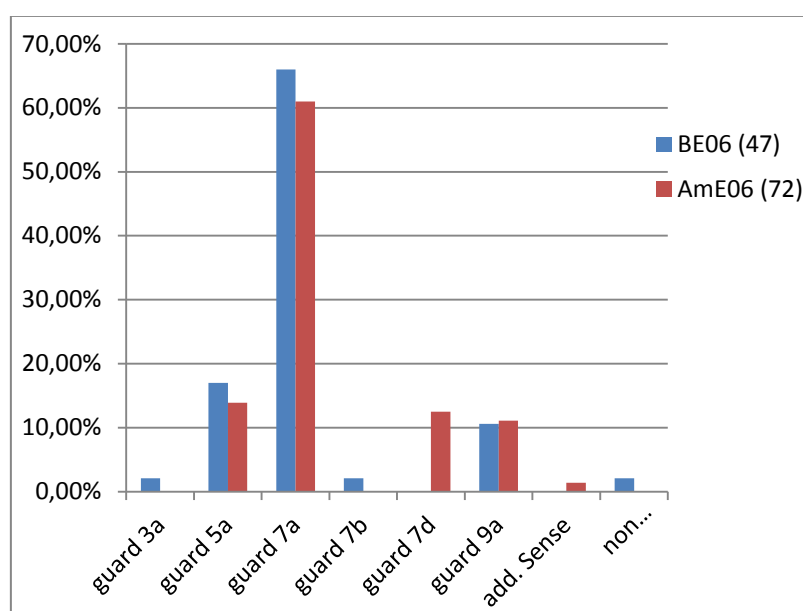
³⁰ Cf. discussion in section 4.2.1 above.

³¹ Cf. examples (11) and (12) in this section to compare *terror* (1) and *fear* (2d).

Nothing in these two examples indicates that the feeling of alarm or dread is less intense than in examples (11) and (12) above.

5.2.2 *Guard/ward*

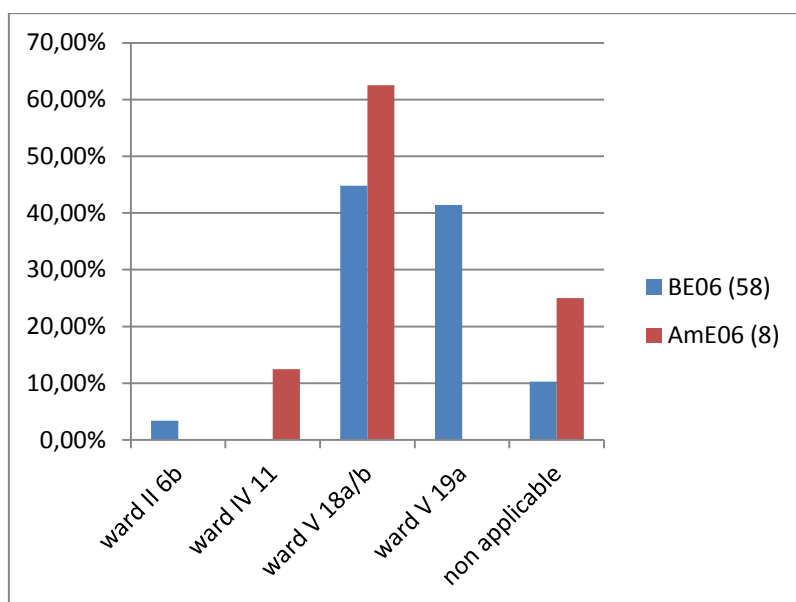
As noted in section 5.1.1, some of the occurrences of *ward* in the corpora are not taken into account in this discussion in view of the fact that they are not used as nouns. Of the eight instances of *ward* in *AmE06*, two³² are not being considered, so that the final number of occurrences is reduced to six. In addition, six of the 58 examples of *ward* in *BE06* are not accounted, since in them *ward* is used as a verb in the phrasal combination *to ward off* ‘to prevent something unpleasant from harming or coming close to you’³³ (*CDO*, s.v. *ward sth off*). Moreover, one example of *guard* in *BE06* has been disregarded since it does not seem to correspond to any of the senses listed in the *OED*.



Graph 4: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *guard*.

³² See examples (3) and (4) in section 5.1.1 above.

³³ As in example (3) from *AmE06* in section 5.1.1 above.



Graph 5: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *ward*.

The results of the occurrences of this pair of near-synonyms are the ones which seem to show more important differences in what concerns their usage between the two varieties of English. Firstly, there are many more instances of *ward* documented in *AmE06* than in *BE06* (cf. graph 5 above). Furthermore, the two corpora also show discrepancies in what concerns the use of *guard*, although not as noteworthy as in the case of *ward*, since there is a much higher number of occurrences of this noun in *AmE06* than there is in *BE06* (cf. graph 4 above).

Even though some of the senses coincide, as is the case of *guard* (7a) and *ward* (18a/b), which are the most frequently employed meanings of the two words, or of *guard* (5a), which shows a fairly high percentage in both corpora, there are some meanings which appear in one corpus but not in the other. This is the case of *ward* (19a), of which there are 24 examples (41.4%) in *BE06*, but also of *guard* (9d), documented nine times (12.5%) in *AmE06*. The case of *guard* (9d) can be explained by the fact that, just as its definition in the *OED* makes clear (cf. appendix 4, s.v. *guard* 9d) it refers to a player of a particular position in either American football or basketball, two sports which are very common in the USA but not in the UK. On the contrary, there

seems to be no such clear indication of why *ward* (19a) only appears in the British English corpus.

Moving on to the occurrences of the senses in the *OED* of *guard* and *ward* which were taken as being synonymous (cf. Table 2 in section 4.2.2), it can be noted, by having a look at the graph, that only one of the senses of *ward*, namely n.2 IV 11, appears in the corpora, though only in one isolated example:

18. “*Lord Scales is out of the Tower with his men, headed for the bridge, and the mayor and aldermen have called up the **wards** and are moving to join him against Cade. “God save us all,” Mistress Hercy breathed, signing herself with the cross.* (AmE06 L23)

It is not very surprising that this is the only sense of *ward* accounted for in Table 2 (cf. section 4.2.2 above) which appears in the corpora, given that all the other senses apart from *ward* (III 8a) are noted as being either archaic or obsolete in the present-day. On the contrary, three of the five³⁴ senses of *guard* accounted for in Table 2, including that of 9a, taken as being synonymous with *ward* (n.2 IV 11) appear in the corpora:

19. Sense 9a: *A rear **guard** forms up to protect their retreat, weapons firing into the waves of oncoming men that seek to reach them.* (Ame06 M02)
20. Sense 7a: *‘She let her eyes slide sideways to the other **guard**, who was now picking his nose and wiping his fingers on his sleeve “what trials I might face at the river could hardly be worse than those you endure here!’* (BE06 N28)
21. Sense 3a: *Agitated, he clenched his fists and jerked his lower arms up and down every couple of seconds like a demented boxer raising and lowering his **guard**.* (BE06 L17)

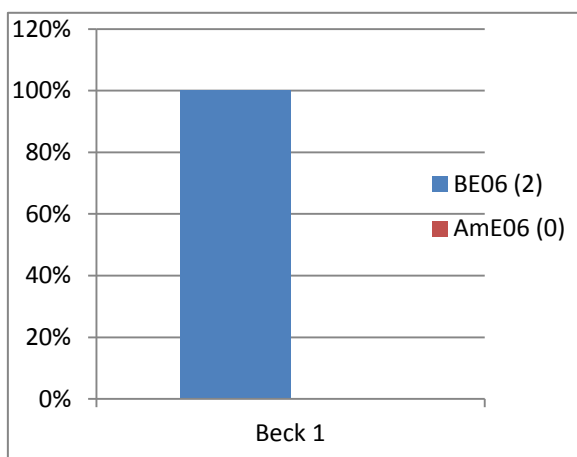
Nonetheless, the instances of *guard* (9a), contrary to that of its apparent doublet *ward* (n.2 IV 11) seen in example (18), always appear in compound forms, as for instance *bodyguard*, *advance guard*, *National Guard* or *rear guard*. This could be taken as a sign of the two words being used slightly differently in the present-day.

In addition, in view of the fact that there are more instances of the senses of *guard* than of *ward* which were taken as being synonymous, it seems clear that, as mentioned in the analysis of this pair of near-synonyms in section 4.2.2, it is *ward* which in most of the cases seems to have lost the competition against *guard*. This is particularly evident

³⁴ Compare the senses of *guard* in Table 2 in section 4.2.2 and graph 3 in this section.

in the case of *guard* (7a) and *ward* (n.1), given that this sense of *guard* is the most employed in both corpora with 44 instances (61%) in *AmE06* and 31 instances (66%) in *BE06*, while *ward* (n.1), being noted as obsolete in the *OED*, does not appear in any of the two corpora. Moreover, *guard* (9a) appears nine times, taking into account the occurrences of both corpora, while *ward* (n.2 IV 11), as stated above, appears only once in *AmE06*.

5.2.3 Beck/stream

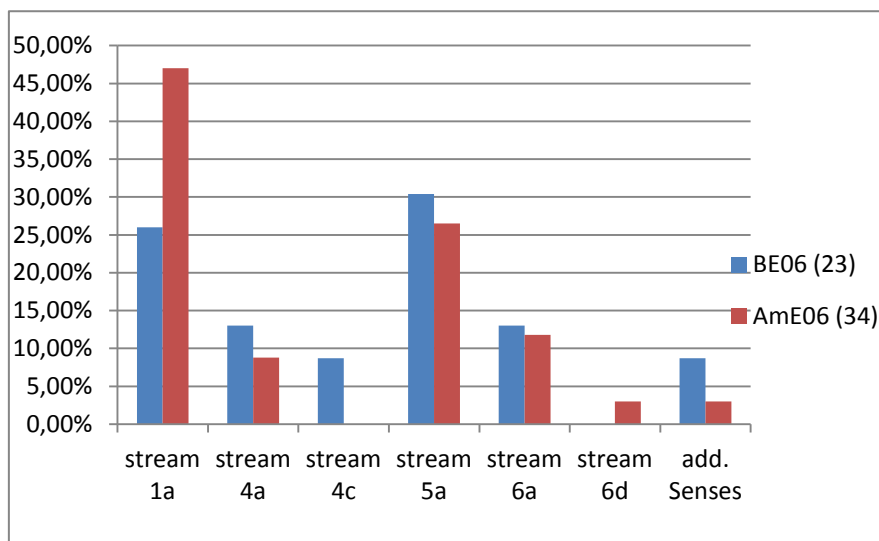


Graph 6: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *beck*.

When comparing the occurrences of *beck* and *stream* in the two corpora, we find a much higher number of examples of *stream* than of *beck*. Furthermore, as could be expected, *beck*, of Old Norse origin, which according to the *OED* is used only in some Northern and Eastern varieties of British English, appears just twice in the *BE06* corpus, while it is not attested in *AmE06* (cf. graph 6 above). This fact confirms the *OED* statement that *beck* is restricted to a particular variety of English (cf. appendix 6, s.v. *beck* 1). Moreover, the two instances of the word in *BE06* are from the same novel, *Hellbent*, by the Northern English writer Anthony McGowan. McGowan uses it in sense 1, that is as ‘a brook or stream’ (*OED*, s.v. *beck* n.1 1), and as can be identified in examples (22) and (23) below it could therefore be used interchangeably with *stream* (1a) in these particular instances:

22. *We all know that: kids, parents, teachers, the rats in the **beck** that runs along the side of the school, the pigeons that shit on the roof.* (BE06 N07)
23. *It lies alongside the **beck** like a squalid drunk, breathing in the stinking air that drifts off the brown foamy water.* (BE06 N07)

It is, however, not surprising to find *beck* instead of *stream* in these examples, not only because the author of the novel is from Northern England, but also because the setting of the novel, or at least the part from which the two examples are taken, is placed in the area of Yorkshire in the Northeast of England. As stated in the *OED*, although *stream* is the standardized form and thus the most commonly employed of the two near-synonyms, *beck* is ‘the ordinary name in those parts of England from Lincolnshire to Cumbria which were occupied by the Danes and Norwegians (...)’ (s.v. *beck* n.1 1).



Graph 7: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *stream*.

Moving on to the occurrences of *stream*, we can see that sense 1a, which is a synonym of *beck* (1), is one of the most frequently employed senses of the word in both *BE06* and *AmE06* as seen in graph 7 above. Two examples are provided below:

24. *The path climbed over tangled labyrinths of tree roots, dived down slopes into sunlit **streams**, and skirted around the eerie, man-size mushroom-shaped termite mounds that grew out of the forest floor* (BE06 N12).
25. *They were walking along Stony Run Creek, a narrow **stream** in a park known mainly to those whose houses bordered it* (AmE06 L06).

In *BE06* 26% of the 23 examples correspond to this meaning while 47% of the 34 instances in *AmE06* represent it (cf. graph 7 above). In *Ame06* it seems as if sense 1a is

by far the most commonly used in written American English, given that meaning 5a corresponds to only 26.5% of the occurrences of the noun, being the second most employed in the corpus. On the other hand, in *BE06*, sense 5a shows a slightly higher percentage in usage than 1a, namely 30.4%, showing that this may be the most common meaning of the noun in British English. If this is the case, there could perhaps be a difference in usage between the two varieties of English since the corpus instances show that they differ in what seems to be the most frequent meaning of *stream* in the present-day, although this difference seems to be very small, and may thus not be very significant. Moreover, by having a look at the remaining examples in the corpora, the two varieties seem to coincide in terms of which meanings the instances account for, since they correspond to more or less the same senses, namely senses 4a and 6a.³⁵ By looking at the graph 7 above, it can be seen that there are two senses which appear in one corpus but not in the other, although on very few occasions. This is the case of meanings 4c and 6d:³⁶ 4c appears twice in *BE06* but none in *AmE06*, while there is one instance of 6d in *AmE06* but not a single one in *BE06*.

5.2.4 *Napkin/serviette*

In the *OED* entry for *serviette* the term appeared as considered more vulgar than its doublet *napkin* in the present-day.³⁷ It is, however, not possible to determine whether *serviette* is seen as bearing a less respectful connotation in the contemporary language, since no occurrence of the term has been attested in any of corpora. *Napkin*, on the other hand, appears in both corpora, though not in significant number. In *BE06* there are three

³⁵ Cf. appendix 7.

³⁶ 4c: 'A current or flow of air, gas, electricity' (*OED*, s.v. *stream* 4c).

6d: 'stream of thought = stream of consciousness' (*OED*, s.v. *stream* 6d).

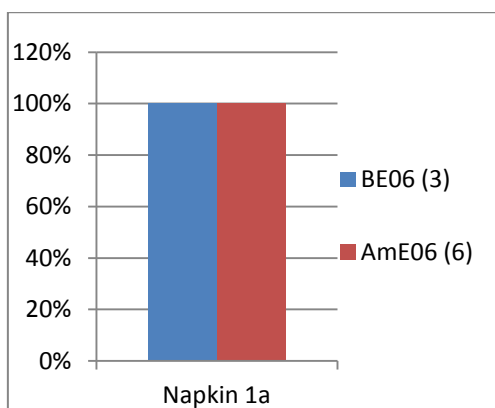
³⁷ Cf. the etymology of *serviette* in section 4.2.4 above.

examples of the word, while it appears six times in *AmE06*, of which two are compound words, namely *10-napkin* and *napkin-like*.

Moreover, in all nine occurrences *napkin* is used in sense 1a: ‘A usually square piece of cloth, paper, etc., used at a meal to wipe the fingers and lips and to protect the clothes (also occas., to place dishes on); a table napkin’ (OED, s.v. *napkin* 1a, cf. appendix 8), as can be appreciated in examples (26), (27) and (28):

26. *She said to get you as well, Uncle Jerome. Lead the way then, princess. Jerome wiped his hands on a **napkin** and leaned forward to murmur, Later, in Gemma's ear.* (BE06 P17)
27. *"I hear you're a social worker," he said as we both lifted our **napkins** and placed them on our laps, as so many had said before him.* (AmE06 K16)
28. *“So she'll take it off and maybe lay it across her lap, **napkin-like**, for propriety's sake.* (AmE06 F10)

This is precisely the meaning of *napkin* which according to the entries of the *OED* (cf. Table 4 in section 4.2.4 above) seems to be a synonym of *serviette*, and which could thus be in competition with it in the present-day. Nonetheless, given that *napkin* seems to be used with greater frequency than its doublet, it can be taken as an indication of *serviette* losing the competition. Moreover, seeing that all instances of *napkin*, both those in *BE06* and in *AmE06*, are used with this meaning (1a) (cf. graph 8 below) even though a whole range of other senses of the word appears listed in the *OED*, there seems to be no difference in what concerns the usage of the terms between the two varieties of English under analysis here.



Graph 8: Overview and frequency breakdown of the results of *napkin*.

6. Conclusion

The results obtained from the analysis of the four groups of near-synonyms from a diachronic perspective clearly indicate that most of the information previously existing about the processes of borrowing and semantic change can be applied to the cases examined in this dissertation. The near-synonyms which have been the focus here have come to exist in English due to borrowings from languages which have had a significant impact on it throughout its history. The results therefore show how large-scale borrowing does, indeed, lead to the existence of near-synonyms between foreign and native terms. This, in turn, typically leads to one of the words experiencing semantic change or becoming discarded precisely as Samuel (1972) predicted. What seems to have happened in most cases is that the near-synonyms have come to be differentiated, not so often in terms of their conceptual meaning as in some of the remaining meanings (connotative, affective, stylistic or collocative). Moreover, as the entries in the *OED* show, most words are by nature polysemic, which means that two or more words generally coincide in one sense while they differ in the rest. Consequently, synonyms, just as Katamba (1994) explains, are not interchangeable in most situations, but may be exchanged freely in particular contexts. This confirms that languages are in general economical systems and thus work against exact synonymy.

Nonetheless, some of the results obtained here diverge from what has previously been said about the process of borrowing and about particular relationships that English has maintained with other languages. Prestigious borrowings, such as French and Latin loan-words, are said to concentrate in particular semantic fields. This can be appreciated in *guard* and *ward* which belong to the semantic fields of war and military affairs. On the contrary, the same cannot be applied to *terror* and *trepidation*, of French and Latin origin respectively, which seem to resemble more the case of *beck*, of Old Norse origin,

inasmuch as these two words seemingly belong to the every-day vocabulary rather than to specialized language, denoting states or feelings. In addition, prestigious borrowings typically lead to the existence of stylistic variants in the language. However, this does not seem to apply in the case of *fear/terror/trepidation*, in which there seems to be no difference as regards the stylistic meanings of the three nouns. Moreover, the term *fear*, of Old English origin, despite losing the competition against *terror*, is probably the most common of the three terms in the present-day. This shows that even though the types of words that are borrowed usually differ greatly depending on whether the languages in question are considered as maintaining an adstratal relationship or one where one language is a superstratum and the other a substratum, there are indubitable exceptions.

When comparing the information from the entries of the *OED* with the results from the two contemporary corpora, it can be noted that the examples in *BE06* and *AmE06* mostly reflect what is stated in the *OED*. Those meanings marked as obsolete and archaic in the *OED* are not documented in the contemporary corpora, and those listed as rare do not normally appear either, and if, they seem to be used very occasionally.

When contrasting the use of the members of each group of near-synonyms in the two varieties of English, they seem to coincide in most of the cases. There are, however, some significant differences, especially in the use of the terms *ward* and *guard*, given that the corpora differ greatly as regards the number of instances of each noun. In addition, the two varieties also behave differently in some of the meanings of the words, since *ward* (19a) and *guard* (9d) show a considerably common use in one corpus but do not appear even once in the other; *ward* (19a) appears 24 times in *BE06* while there are nine examples of *guard* (9d) in *AmE06*.

A more comprehensive study of these near-synonyms, by taking into account, for instance, corpora of spoken British and American English, would provide a more

exhaustive view of their use in the present-day, and thus contribute more deeply to the understanding of how the members of the pairs or trios of near-synonyms examined here are used in different styles and registers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Meanings of *fear* n.1 (OED)

†1. In Old English: A sudden and terrible event; peril.

2.

a. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil.⁴

Now the general term for all degrees of the emotion; in early use applied to its more violent extremes, now denoted by *alarm*, *terror*, *fright*, *dread*. In 14th c. sometimes pleonastically ***dread and fear***.

c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 97 Hi..wið-utan fore godes blisse bodedan.

c1290 *S. Eng. Leg.* I. 82/15 He ne bi-lefte for no fere.

c1340 *Cursor M.* (Trin.) 2914 Into þe felde he drouȝe for feer.

1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomew de Glanville *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (1495) XII. xxxiv. 434 The ostryche maye not see the horse wythout fere.

c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (Roxb.) xxxi. 140 Fals hert myght noȝt bere þe grete drede and fere þat þai had.

1490 CAXTON tr. *Eneydos* xv. 61 O Jupyter, hast thou..determined..to gyue vs tremoure and feere.

1562 J. HEYWOOD *Prov. & Epigr.* (1867) 9 Feare may force a man to cast beyonde the moone.

1588 A. KING tr. P. Canisius *Cathechisme or Schort Instr.* 17 He..may..without al feir say [etc.].

1611 *Bible (A.V.)* Exod. xv. 16 Feare and dread shall fall vpon them.

1671 MILTON *Paradise Regain'd* III. 206 Where no hope is left, is left no fear.

1725 I. WATTS *Logick* I. VI. §12 We are in Danger of it [Passion], it raises our fear.

1776 GIBBON *Decline & Fall* I. 303 Fear has been the original parent of superstition.

1809–10 S. T. COLERIDGE *Friend* (1865) 107 A contract..might be entered into through fear.

1875 H. E. MANNING *Internal Mission of Holy Ghost* x. 265 Fear without fortitude degenerates into timidity.

b. *personified*.

c. An instance of the emotion; a particular apprehension of some future evil.

d. A state of alarm or dread. Chiefly in phrase *in fear*; also, †*to put in (a) fear*, *to fall into fear*.

1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 402 Þo þe Saracens yt yseye, hii were somdel in fere.

1535 *Bible (Coverdale)* Rest of Esther xiv. D, Delyuer me out of my feare.

1581 G. PETTIE tr. S. Guazzo *Ciuile Conuersat.* (1586) III. 159 b, They..make it a sport to put their children in feare.

1623 J. BINGHAM tr. Xenophon *Hist.* 13 They, and Menon himselfe, were put in a feare.

1653 H. HOLCROFT tr. Procopius *Persian Wars* I. 17 in tr. Procopius *Hist. Warres Justinian*, The Barbarians..fell into feare and disorder.

1691 A. GAVIN *Frauds Romish Monks* 390 She continued..in deadly fears.

1736 BP. J. BUTLER *Analogy of Relig.* I. iii. 49 This State of Fear being itself often a very considerable Punishment.

1771 E. GRIFFITH tr. 'P. Viaud' *Shipwreck* 200, I set out forthwith..in fear and trembling.

3. This emotion viewed with regard to an object; the state of fearing (something).

a. Apprehension or dread of something that will or may happen in the future.

Const. *of, to withinf.*; also with clause introduced by *that* or *lest*.

a1300 *Body & Soul* 172 in *Map's Poems* [MS. Laud 108, f. 200] Ne thorte us have frigt ne fer that God ne wolde his blisse us sent.

a1538 T. STARKEY *Dial. Pole & Lupset* (1989) 29 He..for fere of the same daungerys runnyth in to a relygyous house.

1569 R. GRAFTON *Chron.* II. 355 They are euer in feare to lose that they haue.

1647 KING CHARLES I *Let.* in *Antiquary* I. 97 The feare of your being brought within the power of the army.

1849 T. B. MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* I. 459 The..king might..without any fear of opposition from England, proceed to annex Brabant.

1884 *Manch. Examiner* 20 May 5/2 The fears of a general crisis are passing away.

b. *esp.* in phrase *for fear*, where in mod. use the sense of the n. is often weakened; thus *for fear of* = 'in order to avoid or prevent'; *for fear that or lest* (also *colloq.* with ellipsis of the conj.) = 'lest'

c. Apprehensive feeling towards anything regarded as a source of danger, or towards a person regarded as able to inflict injury or punishment.

4. Solicitude, anxiety for the safety of a person or thing. Also in phrase (*for, in*) *fear of one's life* .

5. In various objective senses.

a. Ground or reason for alarm. Chiefly in phrase (*there is*) *no fear* ; now often used as an exclamation. The usual sense of *no fear* is now 'not likely', 'certainly not'.

†**d.** An object of fear; something that is, or is to be, feared. In the Bible occas. by a Hebraism, the object of (a person's) religious reverence, the God of (his) worship.

1535 *Bible* (Coverdale) Prov. x. D, The waye of the Lorde..is a feare for wicked doers.

1561 J. DAUS tr. H. Bullinger *Hundred Serm. vpon Apocalips* lxiii. 449 Therfore let God be our feare.

1607 T. HEYWOOD *Woman Kilde with Kindnesse* sig. B3^v, The rumor of this feare, stretcht to my eares.

1611 *Bible* (A.V.) Gen. xxxi. 53 Iacob sware by the feare of his father Isaac.

1611 *Bible* (A.V.) Prov. i. 26, I wil mocke when your feare commeth.

1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* IX. 285 His [*sc.* Satan's] fraud is then thy fear

Appendix 2: Meanings of *terror* n. (OED)

1. The state of being terrified or extremely frightened; intense fear or dread; an instance or feeling of this. Also in *in terror* (of something or someone).

- c1480 (►a1400) *St. George* 701 in W. M. Metcalfe *Legends Saints Sc. Dial.* (1896) II. 196 He..but rednes ore terroure of goddis son wes confessoure.
- ?a1513 W. DUNBAR *Ballat Passioun* in *Poems* (1998) 38 For grit terroure of Chrystis deid The erde did trymmill quhair I lay.
- 1560 *Bible (Geneva)* Psalms lv. 4 The terrors [*Coverdale* fear] of death are fallen vpon me.
- 1615 G. SANDYS *Relation of Journey* 20 By little and little [they] descended as their terrors forsooke them.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* (1623) IV. ii. 12 It is the Cowish terror of his spirit That dares not vndertake.
- 1657 G. THORNLEY tr. Longus *Daphnis & Chloe* 46 Pan sends a Terroure upon the Methymnæans.
- 1711 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 7. ¶3 This Remark struck a pannick Terror into several that were present.
- 1752 H. AP D. PRICE *Genuine Acct. Life & Trans.* xv. 247 Living in Terror of any Attempt upon her Chastity.
- 1794 W. GODWIN *Caleb Williams* III. v. 87 The terrors with which I was seized..were extreme.
- 1837 W. WHEWELL *Hist. Inductive Sci.* I. 297 The astrologer examined the aspect of the stars, and while he did this,..showed hesitation, alarm, increasing terror.
- 1876 TROLLOPE *Prime Minister* IV. x. 162 You would not wish to live all your life in terror of seeing Arthur Fletcher.
- 1900 S. J. WEYMAN *Story of Francis Cludde* iv. 45 The terrors of capture got hold of my mind.
- 1936 E. GOUDGE *City of Bells* xiii. 338 A solitary who has cut himself off from human contact comes to have a terror of his fellow humans.
- 1960 C. DAY LEWIS *Buried Day* ii. 33 A delicious terror seized me.
- 2009 *New Yorker* 12 Oct. 124/2 His duties..are as much a part of who he is as his terror of intimacy..and his constant low-level depression.

2.

a. The state or quality of being terrible or causing intense fear or dread; a thing or person that causes terror; something terrifying. Also: the excitation of pleasurable feelings of fear by the depiction of violence, the supernatural, etc., as a literary genre.

- a1500 (►?c1425) *Speculum Sacerdotale* 80 (*MED*), For a gastenyng terror and cautele, let be enioyned to hure penaunce of vii yere in this maner.
- 1528 *Rede me & be nott Wrothe* sig. b vii, Threatnyng with fearfull terroure.
- 1560 J. DAUS tr. J. Sleidane *Commentaries* f. ccix, He vseth hys name sometime, only for a clooke and a terroure.
- 1601 T. CAMPION in P. Rosseter *Bk. of Ayres* I. xviii. sig. F, The horrors of the deepe, And terroures of the Skies.

1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* II. 704 So spake the grieslie terrour.
 1712 J. ADDISON *Spectator* No. 333. ¶22 The Messiah appears cloathed with so much Terrour and Majesty.
 1788 GIBBON *Decline & Fall* (1846) V. I. 16 The ferocious Bedoweens, the terror of the desert.
 1815 SCOTT *Lord of Isles* VI. xvi. 244 To the seeming page he drew, clearing war's terrors from his eye.
 1864 J. H. BURTON *Scot Abroad* I. ii. 61 He became..the terror of all the well-disposed within the district.
 1917 D. SCARBOROUGH *Supernat. in Mod. Eng. Fiction* i. 6 *Gothic* is here used to designate the eighteenth-century novel of terror dealing with mediaeval materials.
 1921 E. BIRKHEAD (*title*) The tale of terror: a study of the Gothic romance.
 1943 *Triumphs of Engin.* 56/2 Fortunately that constant terror of the tunneller—the underground spring—was nowhere encountered.
 1977 M. ASHLEY *Who's Who in Horror & Fantasy Fiction* 103 His masterpiece of terror was *The Castle of Ehrenstein* (1854), a superb portrayal of a ghost-ridden castle.
 1999 S. RUSHDIE *Ground beneath her Feet* ii. 52 He would be a terror, as the great lizards had been, the terror of the earth, until the long night fell.

3.

a. hist. With *the*. Usu. with upper-case initial. The period of the French Revolution from about March 1793 to July 1794, marked by extreme repression and bloodshed; a similar period of violent repression occurring in other countries, esp. the former Soviet Union during the first half of the 20th cent. See also *Red Terror* *n.* at *RED adj. and n.* *Special* uses 2d(a), *White Terror* *n.* at *WHITE adj.* *Special* uses 1e.

b. As a mass noun. The use of organized repression or extreme intimidation; terrorism.

Appendix 3: Meanings of *trepidation* n. (OED)

1. Tremulous agitation; confused hurry or alarm; confusion; flurry; perturbation.

- 1625 BACON *Ess.* (new ed.) 89 There vseth to be more trepidation in Court, vpon the first Breaking out of Troubles, then were fit.
- a1639 H. WOTTON *Reliquiæ Wottonianæ* (1651) 176 The success of that great day, in such trepidation of the State made every man meritorious.
- 1780 JOHNSON *Let.* 9 June (1992) III. 268 They did their work at leisure..without trepidation, as Men lawfully employed.
- 1796 F. BURNEY *Camilla* I. II. xi. 323 Miss Margland..in equal trepidation from anger and from fear.
- 1879 M. ARNOLD *G. Sand* in *Mixed Ess.* 318, I found a large party assembled. I entered with some trepidation.

2. Tremulous, vibratory, or reciprocating movement; vibration; oscillation, rocking; an instance of this; also, involuntary trembling of the limbs, as in paralytic affections; tremor.

- 1605 BACON *Of Advancement. Learning* II. sig. Dd1, Massiue bodies..haue certaine trepidations and wauerings before they fixe and settle.
- 1696 J. EDWARDS *Demonstr. Existence God* I. vii. 137 (*heading*) Earth-quakes and trepidations of the earth.
- 1750 JOHNSON *Rambler* No. 1. 13 My impatience..will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.
- 1822 J. M. GOOD *Study Med.* III. 298 A considerable degree of trepidation reached occasionally to her fingers' ends.
- 1837 W. WHEWELL *Hist. Inductive Sci.* II. 302 The trepidation of the body struck perpetually generates a new sound.
- 1899 *New Sydenham Soc. Lexicon*, *Trepidation*, a rhythmic movement of the foot in certain forms of paraplegia and in epilepsy.

3. *Astron.* A libration of the eighth (or ninth) sphere, added to the system of Ptolemy by the Arab astronomer Thabet ben Korrah, c950, in order to account for certain phenomena, esp. precession, really due to motion of the earth's axis.

Appendix 4: Meanings of *guard* n. (OED)

†1.

a. Keeping, guardianship, custody, ward. *to take guard : to take care. Obs*

2. Protection, defence. *Obs. or arch.*

3.

a. Sword-exercise, Boxing, etc. A posture of defence; hence, the weapons or arms in such a posture. *at open guard: in a position which leaves the swordsman open to attack.*

- 1601 B. JONSON *Every Man in his Humor* I. iii. sig. C4, Twine your bodie more about, that you may come to a more sweet comely gentlemanlike guard.
- 1604 SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* IV. vii. 85 + 2 The Scrimures of their nation He swore had neither motion, guard, nor eye, If you opposd them.
- 1649 T. FULLER *Just Mans Funeral* 7 This makes them lie at an open guard, not fencing.
- 1655 W. GURNALL *Christian in Armour: 1st Pt.* 111 He is a weak fencer that layes his soule at open guard to be stabbed and wounded with guilt, while he is lifting up his hands to save a broken head.
- 1687 W. HOPE *Scots Fencing-master* 4 A Guard is a posture which a Man putteth his body into for the better defending of himself from his Adversaries thrusts or blowes.
- 1802 C. JAMES *New Mil. Dict.* (at cited word), The word *guard* is seldom applied among small swordsmen to any position but those of carte and tierce; the other motions of defence are stiled parades.
- 1802 C. JAMES *New Mil. Dict.* at *Broadsword*, The principal guards with the broad sword are: The *inside guard* (similar to carte in fencing)..The *outside guard* (resembling tierce)..The *medium guard*, which is a position between the inside and outside guard..The *hanging guard* (similar to prime and seconde)..The *St. George's guard*, which protects the head.
- 1833 *Regulations Instr. Cavalry* I. iv. 123 *Sword Exercise... Inside Guard*—with the ‘single attack,’ the Files engage on the ‘Inside Guard’..*Outside Guard*—Repeating the ‘single attack,’ change to the ‘outside Guard.’
- 1833 *Regulations Instr. Cavalry* 126 It is good practice to put them through the ‘Guards’ and ‘Points’.
- 1841 DICKENS *Old Curiosity Shop* II. lvi. 112 Mr. Swiveller..performed the broad-sword exercise with all the cuts and guards complete.
- 1897 EARL OF SUFFOLK et al. *Encycl. Sport* I. 144 There are four chief guards to one or other of which the swordsman should constantly return after an interchange of blows, and these are known as Engaging Guards.

4.

a. The condition or fact of guarding, protecting, or standing on the defensive; watch; esp. in to keep guard . Hence, the special service of watching performed by a soldier or sailor

- 1596 SPENSER *Second Pt. Faerie Queene* VI. X. sig. Hh7, When faire Pastorell Into this place was brought, and kept with gard Of griesly theeues.
- 1604 SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* I. i. 7 Bar. Haue you had quiet guard? *Fran.* Not a mouse stirring.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *All's Well that ends Well* (1623) III. v. 73 She is arm'd for him, and keepes her guard In honestest defence.
- 1625 BACON *Ess.* (new ed.) 132 Which serueth..to keepe themselues more in Guard.
- 1640 tr. G. S. du Verdier *Love & Armes Greeke Princes* I. 104 They boorded the Pagans ship all three together, leaving their Squires in guard of their bark.
- 1667 MILTON *Paradise Lost* VI. 412 Michael and his Angels..plac'd in Guard thir Watches round.
- 1706 *Phillips's New World of Words* (ed. 6) , Guard, or Gard,..in the Art of War the Duty performed by a Body of Men, to secure all with watchfulness against the Attempts or Surprizes of an Enemy.
- 1712 W. ROGERS *Cruising Voy.* 249 The Inhabitants kept Guard on their Walls.
- 1726 G. SHELVOCKE *Voy. round World* vi. 190 One of the quarter deck guns..being mounted at our guard, was fir'd at sun set.
- 1833 H. MARTINEAU *Loom & Lugger* I. v. 79 The eldest boy was directed to keep guard at the entrance of the closet.
- 1835 *Hoyle's Games* 336 [article *Chess*] Play your men in guard of one another, so that if any be taken, the enemy may also be captured by that which guarded yours.
- 1867 W. H. SMYTH *Sailor's Word-bk.* at *Guard-ship*, The officer of the guard is accountable to the admiral for all transactions on the water during his guard.
- 1876 T. HARDY *Hand of Ethelberta* I. xxiv. 251 It was characteristic of Ethelberta's jealous motherly guard over her young sisters that [etc.].

5.

a. on or upon one's guard, on guard (formerly also †upon one's or the guards, †upon a guard): in a position of defence, on the defensive; (a) with reference to fencing and sentry duty; hence (b)generally. to stand, be, lie upon one's guard: to be watchful, cautious, or vigilant, to take care; so to put, set (a person) on (his) guard. Const. against, for. [Compare French *sur ses gardes* and *en garde*.]

6.†a. Caution, precaution (*obs.*).

7.

a. One who keeps, protects, or defends; a protector, defender; *spec.* one of a guard (sense 9), a sentry, sentinel; a warder in a prison or other place of detention (chiefly U.S.). Also with preceding n. denoting the object defended, as COAST-GUARD n., telegraph guard, etc.

- 1412 in J. Stuart *Extracts Council Reg. Aberdeen* (1844) I. 389 Ilke man duelland in the burgh..sal stand gaird, and [etc.].
- 1474 CAXTON tr. *Game & Playe of Chesse* (1883) III. vii. 138 The gardes and kepars of cytees ben signefied by the .vii. pawn whiche stondeth in the lyfte side to fore the knyght.
- 1483 CAXTON tr. J. de Voragine *Golden Legende* 259 b/1 Saynt Iohan euangelist..as kepar and garde of so noble vyrgyn.
- 1590 SPENSER *Faerie Queene* I. III. sig. C7^v, Her faithfull gard remou'd, her hope dismaid, Her selfe a yielded pray to saue or spill.

- 1598 R. BARRET *Theorike & Pract. Mod. Warres* IV. 104 He is to..consult..with them touching the placing of the gards and Sentinels.
- 1609 SHAKESPEARE *Troilus & Cressida* IV. v. 128 Though the great bulke Achilles be thy guard.
- a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Henry VI, Pt. 1* (1623) I. iii. 106 Fight till the last gaspe: Ile be your guard.
- a1715 BP. G. BURNET *Hist. Own Time* (1724) I. 660 Such as endeavoured to make their escape, and were seized, (for guards and secret agents were spread along the whole roads and frontier of France).
- 1780 W. COWPER *Table Talk* 135 Guards, mechanically formed in ranks, Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks.
- 1819 SHELLEY *Cenci* V. ii. 84 Guards, there, Lead forth the prisoners!
- 1871 B. TAYLOR tr. Goethe *Faust* I. xxv. 253 Thy cries will wake the guards, and they will seize thee!
- 1889 in *Cent. Dict.*
- 1906 J. LONDON *White Fang* V. v. 316 During Jim Hall's third term in prison..he encountered a guard that was almost as great a beast as he.
- 1936 *S.P.E. Tract* (Soc. for Pure Eng.) No. XLV. 190 Why has American practice decided in favour of..guard rather than warder?
- 1952 *Manch. Guardian Weekly* 15 May 4 The guard knew they would do it and retreated.
- 1968 *Times* 11 Mar. 4/2 There were rumours that some of the men had threatened to decapitate a guard every 40 minutes.

b. The man who has the general charge and control of a stage coach or a railway train.

d. *Amer. Football.* Either of the two players (called the *right guard* and *left guard* respectively) that are stationed one on each side of the 'centre-rush'. Also in *Basketball*, either of the two players who are chiefly responsible for the marking of opposing forwards

8. *pl.* (Freq. with capital initial.) The household troops of the English army, consisting of the FOOT-GUARDS *n.*, the *horse guards* (HORSE GUARD *n.*), and the *Life Guards* at LIFEGUARD *n.* 1. Also applied, by extension, to the (orig. seven) regiments of heavy cavalry known as the Dragoon Guards (as distinguished from the Dragoons).

9.

a. A body of persons, esp. soldiers (†also *occas.* ships) engaged to preserve a person or place from injury or attack, to act as an escort, or keep watch over prisoners: with reference to military sentry duty, freq. in *phr.* *to mount, relieve* (†*the*) *guard*. (See also ADVANCE GUARD *n.*, BODYGUARD *n.*, GRAND GUARD *n.* 2, *main guard*, REAR GUARD *n.*², etc., and cf. CORPS DE GARDE *n.*, GARDE-DU-CORPS *n.*) *guard of honour* : a body of soldiers, sailors, policemen, etc. appointed to receive a royal or other person of distinction and to attend at state ceremonials. *Yeomen of the Guard*: see YEOMAN *n.*

- a1513 R. FABYAN *New Cronycles Eng. & Fraunce* (1516) I. lxxx. f. xxxi, [He] founde to haue aboute the kynges parsonne an hondreth Pictes or after some Scottes the whiche he ordeyned for a Garde for the kynges parsonne.

- 1532 in J. Fortescue *Difference Absolute & Limited Monarchy* (1714) vi. 43 The second Ordynarye charge, is the payment of the Wags and Fees of the Kyngs grete Officers, his Courts, his Counceil, his Garde, and other Servaunts.
- 1535 W. STEWART tr. H. Boethius *Bk. Cron. Scotl.* II. 118 Quhair ȝoung Constans that tyme faucht with his gaird, He brocht with him out of Armorica.
- 1569 R. GRAFTON *Chron.* II. 389 The king reteyned vnto him a gard of Archers of Chesshire.
- 1596 J. DALRYMPLE tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1895) II. 36 King Chairlis vi..elected an(e) band of Scotis horsemen; quhilke commounlie was calit the Scotis gaird of armes.
- 1611 *Bible (A.V.)* 2 Kings xxv. 20 Nebuzaradan captaine of the guard tooke these, and brought them to the king of Babylon.
- 1650 in E. Nicholas *Nicholas Papers* (1886) I. 183 There was a Guard of 100 Souldiers sett to keepe all manner of persons whatsoever from coming to speake wth his Lo^r.
- 1671 J. CROWNE *Juliana* IV. 44 The Beef-eaters o' the Guard.
- 1687 A. LOVELL tr. J. de Thévenot *Trav. into Levant* I. 258 These Sangrack Beys mount the Guard by turns.
- 1687 G. MIÈGE *Great Fr. Dict.* II. (at cited word), To come off from the Guard, *descendre la Garde*.
- 1691 N. LUTTRELL *Diary* in *Brief Hist. Relation State Affairs* (1857) II. 294 Our fleet for the winter guard is to consist of 33 men of war.
- 1700 S. L. tr. C. Schweitzer *Relation Voy.* in tr. C. Frick & C. Schweitzer *Relation Two Voy. E.-Indies* 248 Two Dutch Soldiers that had absented themselves from the Guard two days, ran the Gauntlet.
- 1797 A. RADCLIFFE *Italian* II. vi. 178 Vivaldi perceived that the guard was changed.
- 1802 C. JAMES *New Mil. Dict.* (at cited word), As soon as they have taken post, fronting their respective guards, the word of command will be given—‘Officers and non-commissioned officers—to your guards—March! Halt! Front!’ ‘Officers and non-commissioned officers, inspect your guards!’
- 1841 DICKENS *Barnaby Rudge* lxiii. 368 Lord George Gordon..was taken..to the Tower, under the strongest guard ever known to enter its gates.
- 1884 *Mil. Engin.* (ed. 3) I. II. 15 The guard of the trenches is divided into two bodies—1. The main body. 2. The reserve.
- 1887 *Spectator* 13 Aug. 1097 A company of this regiment was guard of honour to the Empress Eugenie.

10.

a. Something which guards, defends, or protects; a protection, defence. *lit.* and *fig*

11.

a. An ornamental border or trimming on a garment. *Obs. exc. Hist.* or *arch.*

†**12.** *Astron. pl.* The two stars of the constellation of the Lesser Bear known astronomically as Beta and Gamma respectively; also *guards of the pole*. Applied also to the two ‘pointers’ of the Great Bear. *Obs.*

†**13.** The amnion or ‘caul’. *Obs.*

†**14.** *Hunting*. (See quot.) [French *gardes*.] *Obs.*

15. *Curling*. (See quot. 1878.)

16. A contrivance of metal, wood, or other material, made for the protection of an object from injury, to prevent accidents by falling, etc.; orig. in many cases used with a prefixed word indicating the position or nature of the protecting contrivance, e.g. *fireguard n.*, *trigger-guard n.*, etc.

b. The part of the hilt of a sword that protects the hand, often of curious workmanship or elaborate design.

1596 J. DALRYMPLE tr. J. Leslie *Hist. Scotl.* (1895) II. 123 A singular sword with scheith and gairdis of gold, sett in precious stanes.

1662 J. DAVIES tr. A. Olearius *Voy. & Trav. J. Albert de Mandelslo* 16 in *Voy. & Trav. Ambassadors*, A kind of broad sword, whereof the hilt is very large, but without any guard.

1687 A. LOVELL tr. J. de Thévenot *Trav. into Levant* III. 43 The Guard is very plain; commonly no more but a handle of Iron, with a cross Bar of the same underneath the Pummel..that the Sword may not slip out of their Hands.

1728 P. WALKER *Life A. Peden* (1827) Pref. 33 What Handles the Swords had whether small or Three barred, or Highland-guards.

1815 M. ELPHINSTONE *Acct. Kingdom Caubul* II. ix. 271 The sword is of the Persian form... The hilt resembles our own, except that it has no guard for the fingers.

1856 G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE *Kate Coventry* (1882) 23/1 The silver-mounted guard of a rapier.

1898 *Cent. Mag.* Jan. 392/1 The guard [of the sword] was a coiled serpent of exquisite workmanship.

17.

†**a.** Short for *GUARD-ROOM n.* or *GUARD-HOUSE n.* *Obs.*

Additional senses:

Compounds

guard dog *n.* a watch-dog.

Appendix 5: Meanings of *ward* n.1 and n.2 (OED)

(n.1)

Obs. A watchman, guard, keeper, warden. **Common in Old English** (often applied to God, as in *rodora weard*, keeper of the skies). Later, chiefly as the second element in compounds, as *bear-*, *gate-*, *hay-*, *mill-*, *woodward*.

a680 CÆDMON *Hymn* 1 Nu scylun hergan hefaen~ricaes uard.

971 *Blickl. Hom.* 11 Salomones reste wæs mid weardum ymbseted.

OE *Beowulf* 229 Weard Scildinga, se þe holmcifu healdan scolde.

1377 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman* B. XVIII. 320 For any wye or warde wide opene the ȝatis.

?1473 CAXTON tr. R. Le Fèvre *Recuyell Hist. Troye* (1894) I. lf. 106, Thou hast slayn the wardes of the serpentes and the portyers of the lions [Fr. (1510) *les soursers des serpens & les portiers des Lyons*] that kepte this contre Inhabitable.

(n.2)

I. Action of watching or guarding

1. The action or function of a watchman, sentinel, or the like; observation for the purpose of discovering the approach of danger; look-out, watch, guard; also, surveillance. Phrases, *to hold, keep ward*. Also in the alliterative formula *watch and ward* (orig. a law phrase): see *WATCH n.* Now *arch*.

OE *Beowulf* 319 Ic to sæ wille, wið wrað werod wearde healdan.

a1375 *William of Palerne* (1867) l. 2202 But ward was þer set wide wher a-boute, of bold burnes of armes þe beres forto seche.

1393 LANGLAND *Piers Plowman* C. vi. 186 Let no kynne consail ne couetyse ȝow departe, That on wit and on wil alle ȝoure wardes kepe.

1502 tr. *Ordynarye of Crysten Men* (de Worde) III. iii. sig. q.ii, And therfore watchen they vpon theyr warde.

1546 *Reg. Privy Council Scotl.* I. 52 Rise with the said Eirle and pay ward and watch with him during the tyme of were.

1563 P. WHITEHORNE tr. *Onosandro Platonico* f. 47, Those, whiche shalbe appointed to make the ward, let them go before the Campe,..and make fyres after suche sorte, that they may see those farre of.

1585 T. WASHINGTON tr. N. de Nicolay *Nauigations Turkie* I. xx. 26 [We] gaue to vnderstand too him that had the warde, that the Ambassadour was there.

1649 C. WASE tr. Sophocles *Electra* 50 Had not I light in the house to keep A faithfull ward.

1697 DRYDEN tr. Virgil *Aeneis* VI, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 384 And dire Tisiphone there keeps the Ward.

1765 W. BLACKSTONE *Comm. Laws Eng.* I. ix. 345 Ward, guard, or *custodia*, is chiefly intended of the day time... Watch is properly applicable to the night only.

1778 R. LOWTH *Isaiah* xxi. 8. 51 O my Lord, I keep my station all the day long; And on my ward have I continued every night.

1813 SCOTT *Bridal of Triermain* III. x. 141 Sounds were heard, as when a guard, Of some proud castle, holding ward, Pace forth their nightly round.

1835 R. C. TRENCH *Gibraltar* in *Poems*, I..saw thy gallant children to and fro Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge gates.

2.

a. **gen. Guardianship, keeping, control. Now rare.** †*out of ward: beyond control, out of hand (obs.)*.

3. Care or charge of a prisoner; the condition of being a prisoner; custody, imprisonment. Now *rare*.

†4. Charge, duty entrusted to one; office. *Obs.*

†5. Care, regard. In phrases, *to have no ward of* , not to regard, not to fear; *no ward*, no matter (*if, how*). *Obs.*

II. A person who is 'in ward'

6.

a. **A minor under the control of a guardian. Also Sc.** †*ward-minor*

b. *transf.* One who is under the protection or control of another.

†7. An orphan under age. *Obs.*

III. Defence.

8.

a. **Fencing. A defensive posture or movement; a mode of parrying. Cf. *GUARD n. 3*.**

a1586 SIR P. SIDNEY *Arcadia* (1590) III. xi. sig. Pp1, He..strake so thicke vpon Amphialus, as if euery blow would faine haue bene foremost. But Amphialus..let passe the storme with strong wardes, and nimble auoidings.

a1592 R. GREENE *Frier Bacon* (1594) sig. H2, *1 Scholler*. Ah well thrust. *2. Scholler*. But marke the ward.

1595 *Saviolo's Practise* I. F 2, With this readinesse must hee strike this reuerso, but withall, his lefte hand must bee vpon the warde of his teacher.

1595 *Saviolo's Practise* I. K 1, When you lie in this warde, and make vpon your enemie towards his right side.

1598 SHAKESPEARE *Henry IV, Pt. 1* II. v. 196 Thou knowest my olde warde: here I lay, and thus I bore my poynt.

1599 G. SILVER *Paradoxes Def.* in *Wks.* (1898) 26 All single weapons haue foure wardes, and all double weapons haue eight wardes. The single sword hath two with the point vp, and two with the point downe.

1599 G. SILVER *Paradoxes Def.* in *Wks.* (1898) 34 The Dagger is an imperfect ward, although borne out straight.

a1614 J. MELVILLE *Autobiogr. & Diary* (1842) 273 Missing his ward, he gettes a porh at the left pape, wharof he dies.

- 1640 *Wits Recreations* sig. E, On a Souldier. The souldier fights well and with good regard, But when hee's lame, he lies at an ill ward.
- 1652 T. URQUHART *Εκκυβαλαυρον* 88 He alters his wards from Tierce to Quart.
- 1810 SCOTT *Lady of Lake* v. 212 Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield. He practised every pass and ward.

9. Sc. Law. Tenure by military service, *WARD-HOLDING**n.* in *to hold ward* = 'to hold in ward' (see *HOLD* v. 6,19b). Also, a payment in commutation of military service; more explicitly *taxed ward* (see *TAXED* *adj.*2c), in contradistinction to *simple or black ward*. Now *hist.* Cf. *CASTLE-GUARD* *n.* 2, 3, *CASTLEWARD* *n.* 2.

†**10. Sc. *ward and warsel*:** security, pledge.

IV. A body of guards.

11. A company of watchmen or guards. Cf. *GUARD* *n.* 9. Now *rare*.

- c1000 ÆLFRIC *Judges* Epil., Ða Iudeiscan..besetton his [*sc.* Christ's] birgene sona mid wearde.
- c1330 R. MANNYNG *Chron. Wace* (Rolls) 5085 He dide sette in wardes seers, Knyghte to wachem, & squiers.
- a1382 *Bible (Wycliffite, E.V.)* (Douce 369(1)) (1850) Jer. li. 12 Vp on the wallis of Babilon rereth a točne, eecheth the warde [*L. augete custodiam*].
- a1400 *K. Alis.* (Laud) 1976 Þer þai telden her paupyloune Þat niȝth & hem restep þare Mid warde þat was good & war. [*Lincoln's Inn MS.* With wardes, bothe gode and warre.]
- 1585 J. HIGGINS tr. Junius *Nomenclator* 483/2 *Miles stationarius*,...one of the watch or ward.
- 1605 *Famous Hist. Stukeley* sig. E2, Bid the Seriant Maior shut the gates, And see them guarded with a double ward.
- 1805 SCOTT *Lay of Last Minstrel* III. xxx. 88 Was frequent heard the changing guard, And watch-word from the sleepless ward.
- 1870 J. R. MACDUFF *Mem. Patmos* xx. 276 Twenty-four wards or companies were appointed night by night to guard the various entrances to the sacred courts

†**12. A garrison.** *Obs*

†**13.** One of the three main divisions of an army, the van, the rear, and the middle or 'main battle'. Also sometimes applied *gen.* to any division led by a subordinate commander. *Obs.*

V. Place for guarding.

14. In a fortress:

†15. An appointed station, post (for a body of soldiers). *Obs.*

†16. *within one's ward*: within the region in which one is safe: in quot.*fig.* Also, *within (another's) ward*: in the region controlled by (another). *Obs.*

17.

†a. A prison (cf. sense 3). *Obs.*

18.

a. An apartment or division in a hospital or lunatic asylum, containing a certain number of beds, or allocated to a particular class of patients.

b. The patients in a ward, collectively.

19.

a. An administrative division of a borough or city; originally, a district under the jurisdiction of an alderman; now usually, a district which elects its own councillors to represent it on the City or Town Council. Also, the people of such a district collectively.

20. In Cumberland (now in Cumbria), Northumberland, and some Scottish counties: One of the administrative districts into which these counties were formerly divided

†21.

a. 'A part or division of a Forrest' (Phillips 1671). App. only *Sc. Obs.*

†22. ? A store-cupboard or wardrobe. *Obs.*

VI. An appliance for guarding.

†23. The part of the hilt of a sword that protects the hand: = **GUARD** *n.* 16b. *Obs.*

1634 T. HERBERT *Relation Some Yeares Trauaile* 147 The hilts [of Persian swords] are without ward.

24.

a. Each of the ridges projecting from the inside plate of a lock, serving to prevent the passage of any key the bit of which is not provided with incisions of corresponding form and size.

Appendix 6: Meanings of *beck* n.1 (OED)

1. A brook or stream: the ordinary name in those parts of England from Lincolnshire to Cumbria which were occupied by the Danes and Norwegians; hence, often used *spec.* in literature to connote a brook with stony bed, or rugged course, such as are those of the north country.

a1400 (►a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Gött.) l. 8946 Made a brig, Ouer a littel becc [*Vesp.* burn, *Trin.* *Cambr.* ryuere] to lig.

c1440 *Promptorium Parvulorum* 29 Bek watyr, rendylle, *riuulus*, *torrens*.

1481 *Descr. Boundaries Ripon* in J. T. Fowler *Acts Church SS. Peter & Wilfrid, Ripon* (1875) 341 Markington becke.

a1552 J. LELAND *Itinerary* (1710) l. 59 There cummith a very litle Bek thorough the Toun of Northalverton..communely caulid Sunnebek.

1610 P. HOLLAND tr. W. Camden *Brit.* l. 722 Wandering becces [*printed* beakes] and violent swift brookes.

1630 R. SANDERSON *Serm.* II. 276 Shallowest becces run with the greatest noise.

1691 J. RAY *Coll. Eng. Words* (ed. 2) 131 A Beck, a Rivulet or small Brook.

1796 R. SOUTHEY *Joan of Arc* l. 235, I have laid me down..and watch'd The beck roll glittering to the noon~tide sun.

1872 W. BLACK *Strange Adventures Phaeton* xxvii. 369 Each gorge and valley has its beck.

2. The valley-bottom through which a beck flows: cf. *BACHE* *n.*

Appendix 7: Meanings of *stream* n. (OED)

1.

a. A course of water flowing continuously along a bed on the earth, forming a river, rivulet, or brook

- c875 *Erfurt Gloss.* 2036 in *Old Eng. Texts* 102 *Torrentibus*, streamum.
- a1000 *Boeth. Metr.* xx. 172 Swa stent eall weoruld..., streamas ymbutan.
- c1275 (♣?a1200) LAȜAMON *Brut* (Calig.) (1978) l. 10640 Nu he stant on hulle & Auene bi-haldeð. hu ligeð i þan stræme [c1300 *Otho* streme] stelene fisces.
- a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 1316 He saw a spring Of a well..Pat oute of ran four gret stremmes; Gyson, fison, tigre, eufrate.
- a1325 (♣c1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 2096 Ðo drempte pharaon king a drem, Ðat he stod bi ðe flodes strem.
- c1405 (♣c1387–95) CHAUCER *Canterbury Tales Prol.* (Hengwrt) (2003) l. 464 She hadde passed many a straunge strem.
- 1470–85 MALORY *Morte d'Arthur* IV. xix. 144 Aboue ther by was the hede of the streme a fayr fontayne.
- a1552 J. LELAND *Itinerary* (1711) VII. 61 For there the Streme of Isis breketh into many Armelets. The Fery [Hinkesey] selfe is over the principale Arme or Streame of Isis.
- 1668 DRYDEN *Of Dramatick Poesie* 62 'Tis like the murmuring of a stream, which not varying in the fall, causes at first attention, at last drowsiness.
- 1709 T. ROBINSON *Ess. Nat. Hist. Westmorland* viii. 48 The River Eden..takes into its Stream the Rivers Eamont and Lowther, which make a considerable Increase to it.
- 1745 *Sc. Transl. & Paraphr.* xxiv. 1 Say, grows the Rush without the Mire? the Flag without the Stream?
- 1782 W. COWPER *Compar.* 9 Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound, How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd!
- 1832 TENNYSON *Lady of Shalott* IV, in *Poems* (new ed.) 17 The broad stream bore her far away, The Lady of Shalott.
- 1837 W. IRVING *Adventures Capt. Bonneville* III. 9 The Lower Nez Percés range upon the Way-lee-way, Immahah, Yenghies, and other of the streams west of the mountains.
- 1871 J. RUSKIN *Arrows of Chace* (1880) II. 160 The first thing the King of any country has to do is to manage the streams of it.

2.

a. Flow or current of a river; force, volume, or direction of flow.

†3. Used vaguely (*sing.* and *pl.*) for: Water, sea. *Obs*

4.

a. A flow or current of water or other liquid issuing from a source, orifice, or vessel. Often *hyperbolically* in *sing.* or *pl.* for a great effusion of blood or tears.

c. A current or flow of air, gas, electricity

5. *transf.*

a. An uninterrupted succession of persons, animals, or things, moving constantly in the same direction.

6. *fig.*

a. In various applications, e.g.: A continuous flow of discourse, words, or of time; a continuous series of testimonies, events, or influences tending in one direction; an outflow (of beneficence, etc.), an influx (of wealth, revenue).

d. *stream of thought* = [STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS](#) *n.*

†7. A ray or beam of light; the tail of a comet

†8. A streamer, pennant. *Obs*

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e. *Computing.* A continuous flow of data or instructions, *esp.* one having a constant or predictable rate. Also, a channel for such data.

Appendix 8: Meanings of *napkin* n. (OED)

1.

a. A usually square piece of cloth, paper, etc., used at a meal to wipe the fingers and lips and to protect the clothes (also occas., to place dishes on); a table napkin. Cf. **SERViette** *n.*

- 1384–5 in J. T. Fowler *Extracts Acct. Rolls Abbey of Durham* (1898) I. 265 (*MED*), ij napkins.
1420 *Inventory* in *Lincoln Chapter Acc. Bk.* A. 2. 30 f. 69, 2 nappekynnes 20*d.*
▶1440 *Promptorium Parvulorum* (Harl. 221) 351 Napet, or napekyn, *napella*.
c1475 in *Coll. Ordinances Royal Househ.* (1790) 83 He indenteth with the Thesaurer of the householde in the counting-house for all the..napkins.
1508 *Bk. Keruyng* (de Worde) sig. A.iii, Laye your knyues and set your brede,..your spones and your napkyns fayre folden besyde your brede.
1555 W. WATERMAN tr. J. Boemus *Fardle of Facions* II. x. 215 Thei [*sc.* Tartars] neither vse..table clothe ne napkin.
1617 F. MORYSON *Itinerary* III. 116 The Hostesse..is tied to dresse his meate and give him napkins with like necessities.
1653 W. MEWE in S. Hartlib *Reformed Common-Wealth Bees* (1655) 42 If you please to take a sheet and napkin with me for some time, we shall discourse of this.
1697 in W. Macgill *Old Ross-shire* (1909) I. 129 Ane dossone damask and dornick table clothes and twelff dossone nepkines estimat to Ic. lib.
1726 W. BROOME in Pope et al. tr. Homer *Odysey* V. XX. Observ. 41 They made use of no napkins to wipe their hands, but the soft and fine part of the bread.
1760 S. FOOTE *Minor* I. 24 There is not a buck or a turtle devoured within the bills of mortality, but there, I may, if I please, stick a napkin under my chin.
1790 A. YOUNG *Jrnl.* 18 Jan. in *Trav. France* (1792) I. 277 The idea of dining without a napkin seems ridiculous to a Frenchman.
1841 E. W. LANE tr. *Thousand & One Nights* I. 123 Each person who is to partake of the repast receives a napkin.
1881 W. BESANT & J. RICE *Chaplain of Fleet* I. vi. 149 These she laid on a plate, with bread and salt, and put the whole upon a napkin.
1905 E. TUTE *Dishes for all Seasons* 93 Fry a golden brown in dripping; serve hot on a napkin garnished with parsley.
1978 A. S. C. ROSS in R. Buckle *U & Non-U Revisited* 29 That old favourite non-U ‘serviette’/U ‘napkin’ is still in full force.
2000 B. PRESTON in J. Cummings *World Food: Thailand* 77, I quickly found myself..reaching for one of the rolls of toilet paper which..serve as napkins at dinner tables in Thailand.

2.

a. A handkerchief. Also fig. Now chiefly *Sc.* and *Eng. regional (north.)*.

3.

a. [Used to render Hellenistic Greek *σουδάριον* **SUDARIUM *n.*] In biblical contexts: = **SUDARIUM** *n.* 1.**

4. = NAPPY *n.*³: A (square or shaped) piece of towelling or other absorbent material which is wrapped around the waist (usually of a baby or toddler), drawn up between the legs, and fastened, for the purpose of retaining urine and faeces. Also: a disposable equivalent made from paper and plastic, usually enclosing an absorbent gel. Cf. DIAPER *n.* 2, NAPKIN *n.* 4.

5. Chiefly *N. Amer.* = *sanitary napkin n.* at SANITARY *adj.* Special uses

Appendix 9: Meanings of *serviette* n. (OED)

A table-napkin; also, †a slip-cloth

α.

- 1489 in *Acts Lords of Council Civil Causes* (1839) I. 131/2, xij cuschingis..and xij seruiotis of dornewik.
- 1501 in J. B. Paul *Accts. Treasurer Scotl.* (1900) II. 28 Item, for serviotis to the same [King's burd] vij elne lang and iij quartaris braid.
- 1560 *Stirling Burgh Rec.* (1887) I. 72 Ane hand towall, ane serviat [etc.].
- c1575 *Balfour's Practicks* (1754) 235 The air sall have..twelf servettis and ane buird-claith of dornique.
- 1619 *Reg. Privy Council Scotl.* XII. 761 Tua dusane of dornik serviottis.

β.

- 1588 in J. Anderson *Cal. Laing Charters* (1899) 289 [Twenty-four] linteolum lie seruittis [at 18s. the dozen].
- 1601 in *T. Pont's Topogr. Acc. Cunningham* (Maitland Club) 179 Ten small seruittis, twentie round seruittis.
- c1650 J. SPALDING *Memorialls Trubles Scotl. & Eng.* (1850) I. 155 The Generall him self..and soldiouris, sat down..and of thair awin provisioun, vpone ane servit on thair knie, took thair brakfast.
- 1719 in W. Macgill *Old Ross-sh.* (1909) 131 Table cloths and servites of damask and dornick and hagabag servites, sheets, &c.
- 1821 J. BAILLIE *Lady G. Baillie* in *Metrical Legends* xxxi, Her hands..Unfolding spread the servet white.

γ.

- 1513 G. DOUGLAS tr. Virgil *Aeneid* I. xi. 17 With soft serviettis to mak thair handis clene.
- 1587–8 in J. D. Marwick *Extracts Rec. Burgh Edinb.* (1882) IV. 515 Thai sall nocht..be sene in the streits with thair aiprunes and seruiets.
- 1612 in A. M'Kay *Kilmarnock* 308 Saxteine seruietis of damais.
- 1818 LADY MORGAN *Passages from Autobiogr.* (1859) 114 A dirty coarse canvas *serviette*.
- 1864 G. A. SALA *Quite Alone* I. viii. 133 At table d'hôte time he..carried a serviette in lieu of a feather broom under his arm.
- 1889 'R. TELLET' *Prince Maskiloff* 167 Mordaunt and Scarnell..always spoke of napkins as serviettes.
- 1906 H. BLAND *Lett. to Daughter* 53, I think..she was the sort who would call a table napkin a serviette.